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AND

INDIA CHRISTIAN:

OR,

WHAT HINDUISM HAS DONE FOR INDIA,

AND

WHAT CHRISTIANITY WOULD DO FOR IT.

AN APPEAL TO THOUGHTFUL HINDUS.

SECOND EDITION, 2,000; TOTAL COPIES, 4,000.

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"By their fruits ye shall know them."
The Bible.

"What is not TRUE is not PATRIOTIC."
Raja Sir Madhava Row.

**"The disease born with you will destroy you;
The medicine from a far-off mountain, not born with you,
will cure that disease."**
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PART II.

INDIA HINDU AND INDIA CHRISTIAN.

INTRODUCTION.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new."

India in Transition.—For about three thousand years India remained largely stationary. There were, it is true, some changes; but, on the whole, the people were guided by custom, and were content to "follow the ancients."

During the present century, however, a revolution has been taking place. Western arts and inventions are being introduced. Instead of a flint and steel, lucifer matches are used for getting a light; clocks and watches are superseding the old methods of reckoning time. Instead of travelling by palanquin or bullock cart, the railway is adopted. Instead of spinning and weaving by hand, the steam engine drives thousands of spindles and shuttles. Books are no longer copied page by page, but the printing press is employed. Newspapers, of which their forefathers knew nothing, are eagerly read by modern Hindus.

Western science has also been accepted. Hindu writers remained at home, and framed their geography and astronomy out of their own heads. Both have been abandoned for sciences based on careful observation and experiment. Mount Meru and the seven oceans have been given up; eclipses are no longer supposed to be caused by Rahu. There is no national science. It is the same all the world over.

Political changes have also taken place. Instead of quietly submitting to despotic rule, the rights of subjects are beginning to be understood; National Congresses are being held; and a voice in the administration is being claimed.

All these changes have been beneficial. The Hindu would be an idiot who refused to use matches, to travel by rail, or to read a newspaper because they are "foreign" inventions. It would be equally foolish to adhere to Hindu geography and astronomy. The reign of despotism in India is over. The people will gradually be intrusted with a larger and larger share in the government of the country.

The Grand Problem.—There is, however, a far more important question. Should India, besides the *arts* and *sciences,* adopt also the *Religion* of the West?

Although Christianity is now the prevailing religion in the *West*, it is acknowledged that Europeans received it from the *East*.

Its Founder was born in Asia, and it was first proclaimed in Europe by Asiatic Missionaries.

The above is by far the greatest question now before the people of India, and deserves the most careful inquiry. A woman will not buy a pot in the bazar till she taps it to know whether it is sound. Before a merchant would give his whole property for a gem offered for sale, he would scrutinise it carefully. Incomparably of greater moment, is the salvation of the immortal soul.

False Patriotism.—"Patriotism" means *love of country*. The true feeling is so noble and praiseworthy that many claim the honour due to it whose pretensions are groundless. Smiles says:

"A great deal of what passes by the name of patriotism in these days consists of the merest bigotry and narrow-mindedness, exhibiting itself in national prejudice, national conceit, and national hatred."

This false patriotism prevails among some in India in its worst form. More than twenty years ago the late Sir H. S. Maine condemned it in a Convocation Address. Referring to educated Hindus, he says:

"I constantly read and sometimes hear, elaborate attempts on their part to persuade themselves and others, that there is a sense in which these rejected portions of Native history, and usage, and belief, are perfectly in harmony with the modern knowledge which the educated class has acquired, and with the modern civilization to which it aspires. . . . Whatever the cause, there can be no greater mistake, and under the circumstances of this country, no more destructive mistake."

This "DESTRUCTIVE MISTAKE" is now more rampant than ever. It is not confined to Bengal. *The Hindu*, a Madras journal, says:

"We have observed of late a tendency on the part of some of our educated countrymen to apply their mental powers for irrationally reactionary purposes. Social customs and institutions which are evil in their results, and are the product of past simpler and less civilized conditions, have received elaborate defence; and even certain merits have been attached to them.

"They defend every superstition of our people; they believe in every dogma and worthless ceremonial, and are generally slaves of our exacting priesthood. In their judgment, nothing that our ancestors did could be wrong. Everything Indian is excellence itself, and everything foreign the opposite."

The *Subodha Patrika*, a Bombay journal, corroborates the above:

"Patriotism is now taken to mean a blind praise of all that is ours, and a strong denunciation of all that is foreign. It matters not whether a custom is good or bad; it is ours, and we must praise it. A non-Hindu tells us what we should do; it matters not if he is right; he is not a Hindu and he has no right to tell us what we should do . . . . This is the prevailing spirit of the present times. There is no respect for

truth or *consistency*. A people ruled by such ideas can never improve, and they are sure to work their own ruin by their own hands." June 17th, 1888.

It must be acknowledged that there is nothing new in such a course of conduct. The Emperor Julian attempted it in Europe fifteen centuries ago. An intelligent Indian writer says:

"History tells us that it is in human nature to use every newly-discovered truth in explaining old superstitions. It is after this explanation, too, has been exploded that the truth is able to make its way into the minds of men. India is passing through this intellectual crisis."

The same writer remarks: "I think if there is any phase of our present revolution which is really lamentable, it is that of the general hypocrisy of our educated youths."*

Truthfulness lies at the basis of every virtuous character, and patriotism resting on hypocrisy is a mere sham.

Need of Wide Observation.—There is an expressive Indian comparison to denote persons who draw conclusions from an insufficient knowledge of facts—*frogs in a well.* Hindu pandits are an example. They have studied some Sanskrit books, but they know nothing else. They believe that the whole circle of knowledge is contained in Sanskrit writings, and that to learn anything beyond the Sastras is useless.

Indians who have never left their own country are much in the same position. Addresses were delivered by several of them on the marriage system at a meeting held in Calcutta, a few years ago, at which Dr. Rajendralala Mitra presided. He says the general impression left upon his mind was as follows: "Everything we have is good, and nothing should be done to disturb the *status quo.*"

Dr. Bhandarkar, Professor of Sanskrit, Deccan College, Poona, is probably the most eminent Indian scholar of the present time, and was sent by Government to Europe to represent India at a meeting of the Oriental Congress. What does he say?

"A man born in a certain country with certain social and religious customs and institutions, and in a certain range of ideas, thinks those customs, institutions, and that range of ideas to be perfectly good and rational, and sees nothing objectionable in them, unless he is a man of genius. When, however, he comes to know of other customs, other institutions, and other ideas, and compares them with those to which he has become accustomed, he is able to find out any evil that there may be in the latter, and to see what is better and more rational.

"Here I feel myself in duty bound even at the risk of displeasing some of you, to make passing allusion to the most uncritical spirit that has come over us of praising ourselves and our ancestors indiscriminately, seeing nothing but good in our institutions and in our ancient literature, asserting that the ancient Hindus had made very great progress in all

* *The Indian Magazine,* 1886, pp. 115, 116.

the sciences, physical, moral, and social, and the arts,—greater even by far than Europe has made hitherto—and denying even the most obvious deficiencies in our literature, such as the absence of satisfactory historical records, and our most obvious defects. As long as this spirit exists in us, we can never hope to throw light on our ancient history, and on the excellencies and defects of our race, and never hope to rise."

Bengalis are peculiarly prone to indulge in vain boastings regarding the ancient civilization of India. Mr. Manomohan Ghose remarked some time ago in Calcutta:

"He felt a legitimate pride in the ancient civilization of India, but he was bound to say that an undue and exaggerated veneration for the past was doing a great deal of mischief. It was quite sickening to hear the remark made at almost every public meeting that the ancient civilization of India was superior far to that which Europe ever had."

True Patriotism.—The remark of the veteran statesman, Sir Madhava Row, ought to be engraved on the heart of every Indian lover of his country: "*What is not* TRUE *is not* PATRIOTIC." There is an Indian proverb, "Truth conquers." Any belief, any practice, not founded on truth, must eventually give way, and "great will be the fall thereof."

The reign of error may be long, but it must ultimately succumb to truth. Milton says: "Let Truth and Falsehood grapple; whoever knew Truth put to the worst in free and open encounter."

The correct principle is, that every thing national which is beneficial should be conserved; any belief which is untrue or custom which is injurious should be given up; and improvements should be adopted from any part of the world.

Hindu Opposition to Christianity.—The introduction of railways was disliked by some of the admirers of ancient Hindu civilization. Pandits look upon the study of English instead of Sanskrit as a great mistake. Ignorant old women denounce female education as worse than useless. Most Hindus are strongly opposed to any of their number embracing Christianity, and use every means in their power to prevent it.

It has been shown that India has willingly accepted western arts and science. Of all subjects religion is the most important. It has well been asked, "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" It is possible that the religion of the West may be still more deserving of acceptance than its arts and sciences. It is at least worthy of examination. Christianity neither forbids inquiry nor urges indiscriminate change. It says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." This is the only wise course. Many nations are sunk in the grossest ignorance and superstition. Without inquiry, their improvement would be impossible.

Religions to be tested by their Fruits.—The greatest Teacher

that ever trod the earth said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." This is an excellent criterion.

A religion from God, the Fountain of goodness, should increase the worldly happiness of those who embrace it, promote education, grant equal rights to all, check vice, encourage virtue, and give ennobling ideas of its Author. A religion whose effects are the opposite cannot proceed from the one true God.

The following caution is necessary: A religion is to be judged by its *legitimate* fruits. If a religion enjoins strict justice, and some of its professed adherents act dishonestly, the religion does not deserve to be blamed in their account. Only when practice is in accordance with its precepts is a religion to be praised or condemned.

The general spirit of a religion should also be taken into account. Hinduism has a great number of sacred books, full of contradictions. Quotations may be found for almost every opinion. It is to be judged, not by single texts, but by its writings as a whole.

It is not enough to show that a religion contains *some* excellent teaching. A pure fountain cannot send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter. A religion from the one true God of spotless holiness cannot contain a mixture of good and evil; it must be *entirely* good. That in which they are combined must have originated with *man*—not with *God*.

If a person is about to sit down to dinner, it is not necessary to prove that some of the articles are good and wholesome; but if even one is poisonous, he ought not to eat. So although some excellent precepts may be found in a religion, if it contains others of a contrary character, it ought to be given up.

The effects of a religion are best shown—not by its results on individuals—but by its influence on a nation. For three thousand years Hinduism, in different forms, has been the religion of India: What are its fruits?

In considering this question we have to distinguish between what depends upon Hinduism and what on other causes. Some animals are naturally fierce; others are mild. It is the same with nations, independently of their religion,

Indian Excellencies.—In the following remarks on the fruits of Hinduism, only the evil effects are mentioned; but they are such as follow from it as natural consequences. On the other hand, it is acknowledged that the Hindus generally are better than their religion. Bishop Caldwell says:

"I am very far from supposing everything which is indigenous to India evil. On the contrary, it is a wonder to my mind that the people of India, with such a religion as theirs, should possess so many good qualities as I believe they do; and my explanation of the wonder is that, notwithstanding their religion, God has conferred upon them, through

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the teaching of His providence and through the inheritance of experience, many excellent gifts. I admire much that I see amongst the people of India. I admire their religiousness, I admire their temperance, I admire their patience and gentleness and courtesy. I admire their care of their relations to the farthest remove, and in many particulars I admire what remains of the primeval framework of their village system and their social system. Only let the still more important elements of individual and national eharacter which are produced by Christianity and by Christianity alone, be superadded to these and similar characterictics of race, and the result will be a style of character of which neither India nor Christianity will have need to be ashamed."*

Prayer for Guidance.—A Hindu commentator justly remarks, "They who desire to know the truth are competent for discussion." Along with this, light should be sought from above. The following prayer, written 15 centuries ago by an eminent enquirer, may be adopted:

"O Lord, who art the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life; in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity, nor death; the light, without which there is darkness; the way, without which there is wandering: the truth, without which there is error; the life, without which there is death; say, Lord, 'Let there be light,' and I shall see light and eschew darkness; I shall see the way and avoid wandering; I shall see the truth and shun error; I shall see life and escape death. Illuminate, O illuminate my blind soul, which sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death; and direct my feet in the way of peace."

PART I.

INDIA HINDU:

The Fruits of Hinduism.

The following are some of the results of Hinduism:

1. Ill-Health and Shortness of Life.

Hinduism has this effect in several ways:

1. *By promoting intermarriage between relatives.*—An eminent physician says, "*First* among the causes of sickly infancy and premature death may be mentioned the intermarriage of near relatives." The Hindus have been split up into probably about a lakh of subdivisions, each holding itself aloof from all others. Professor Ranganatha Mudaliar gives the following illustration:

"I am sure I am not guilty of exaggeration when I say that the Mudaliyars residing in Madras are divided into as many as fifty sections,

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* *Christianity and Hinduism*, p. 40.

no one of which can intermarry with any other. The same difficulty of intermarriage exists among Nayudus, and Pillais, and Reddis. It is needless to expatiate on the evil, in a physiological and social point of view, of marriages being contracted between parties so closely related, and of the choice of a husband or wife being confined within such narrow limits."

2. *By its encouragement of Early Marriage.*—A noted Hindu law book says:

" A girl should be given in marriage before her breasts swell. But if she have menstruated before marriage, both the giver and the taker fall into the abyss of hell; and her father, grandfather, and great grandfather are born insects in ordure."

The evil effects of early marriage are thus pointed out by Dr. Mohendra Lal Sircar, an experienced physician:

" Early marriage, in my humble opinion, is the greatest evil of our country. It has stood, so to say, at the very springs of the life of the nation, and prevented the normal expansion of which it is capable.

" From medical observation extending over 30 years, he could say 25 per cent. of Hindu women died prematurely through early marriage, 25 per cent. more were invalided from the same cause, and the vast majority of the remainder suffered in health from it."

Sickly mothers must bear children feeble in health.

3. *Physicians are not respected as they ought, and are prevented from obtaining needful knowledge; midwives are considered low caste and impure.*—According to Hinduism, the Vaidya caste is an impure race from the union of a Brahman male with a Vaisya female. They are also, from caste reasons, prohibited from dissecting the dead bodies of human beings. This hinders them from being properly acquainted with the structure of the body. Many deaths occur in childbirth from the want of skill and barbarous treatment of Hindu midwives.

4. *Pestilence is assigned to false causes, and effective measures are not taken to check it.*—Hinduism attributes small-pox and cholera to Sítala Deví, Mari-amman and other malignant deities or demons, who are supposed to scatter the seeds of the disease in *sport*. Worthless means are employed for their removal, as midnight processions, animal sacrifices, &c., while those which would secure the object are neglected.

5. *Hospitals and Dispensaries are not provided.*—When the English came to India, not a single hospital or dispensary was to be found throughout the whole country. The charity of the Hindus is chiefly devoted to feeding Brahmans; while the sick and distressed are supposed to be reaping the fruits of sins in former births, and receive no pity. It will be shown that in Christian England life is several years longer than in Hindu India.

2. Poverty.

Some of the ways in which Hinduism has tended to this are the following :

1. *By forbidding foreign commerce.*—England is now one of the richest countries in the world. One great cause of this is her commerce. Every sea is traversed by her ships ; her merchants are to be found in every land where wealth can be gained. The Parsis have copied their example, and been similarly benefited.

Hinduism teaches the people of India to regard all foreigners as impure Mlechhas. "In their country the twice-born must not even temporarily dwell."

The folly of this is now acknowledged by enlightened men ; but the above is the doctrine of Hinduism.

2. *By discouraging Agriculture.*—Manu's Code contains the following :

"83. But a Brahman or even a Kshatriya, when living by means of life (enjoined) for a Vaisya, should carefully avoid agriculture, (as it) causes great pain (and) is dependent on other (creatures).

"84. They think agriculture is an excellent thing, (but) by the good this occupation is blamed, for the iron-faced block of wood smites the earth and also the (animals) dwelling in the earth." Book X.

Agriculture is the main wealth of a country. If it is wrong for the twice-born to engage in it, it must also be wrong for the Sudra. Thus, according to Manu, the people of India ought to starve. Even as it is, agriculture is discouraged by being left only to ignorant ryots.

3. *By making the Arts degrading.*—England owes her wealth even more to her manufactures than her commerce, though they are mutually helpful. The Rev. Dr. K. M. Banerjea says :

"The civil architect is branded as a bastard. The carpenter and the goldsmith are accursed, because the Brahmans choose to take umbrage at them. How could the arts flourish in such a society ?"

The country is being flooded with candidates for Government office, who are mere *consumers*—not *producers*. Improved agriculture, developed manufactures, and foreign commerce, are the real ways by which India may be enriched, but Hinduism discourages them all.

4. *By false teaching about marriage.*—It is the common belief of the Hindus that a man who has no son to make offerings for him after death falls into the hell called *Put*. *Putra*, a son, is supposed to mean one who saves from hell.

This is a mischievous error. It fosters the belief that a man

may lead any sort of immoral life if he have a son and plenty of money to spend on his shraddha. It also tends to poverty. Intelligent thoughtful persons do not marry till there is a prospect of their being able to support a family. Foresight in this respect conduces to the happiness of a nation, while recklessness must lead to poverty.

5. *By its false Charity.*—Hindus regard the blind, cripples, lepers, &c., as suffering on account of sins in former birth, whom it would be no merit to relieve. Hence, although they are very charitable, their gifts often tend to poverty. There are upwards of a million professional beggars in India, many of them able-bodied men. Caste feasts are another mode of encouraging idleness. If those who are able had to work for their living, the wealth of the country would be increased.

6. *By its Fatalism.*—It is the belief of the Hindus that all things happen according to *Karma*, and there is a common proverb, "Who can alter the decrees of fate?" The tendency, therefore, is to submit to misfortunes, instead of trying to remedy them. "The contentment of our people," says *The Hindu*, "is the result of moral death during centuries."

7. *By its teaching about Mukti.*—According to Hinduism, every being has to pass through 84 lakhs of births. How to "cut short the 84?" is the grand inquiry. Hinduism teaches that the way to Mukti is to refrain from all action—good or bad.

The personal happiness of the individual is the only consideration. His aim is neither to see, hear, nor care about what goes on in the world around him. The people of his nation may be sunk in ignorance, he is not to instruct them; they may be starving from famine, he is not to provide them with food; they may be dying from pestilence, he is not to give them medicine. With his eyes fixed on the tip of his nose, he is to try to meditate without any object. This is a religion of selfishness.

8. *By making the Hindus a nation of children.*—The ways in which Hinduism has this effect will be noticed hereafter. How it tends to poverty has to be explained.

It is characteristic of children to be fond of show. The Hindus, above all nations of the world, spend money on jewels, and waste it on marriage display. Gold and silver to the amount of about 1,000 lakhs a year come into India at present; but instead of employing it usefully, the bulk of it is melted into ornaments. The value of jewels in the country exceeds 200 crores of rupees, which at 12 per cent. interest would pay all the land revenue. Money to make railways had to be lent by Europeans, who get about 5 crores a year in interest, which would have been kept in the country were it not for the childish love of display. How people get into debt by lavish marriage expenses is well known.

3. National Ignorance.

1. *Education is denied to the great bulk of the people, and especially to women.* A Bengali writer says:

"None but a Brahman, declared the Shastras, should read the Vedas, or impart religious instruction, and as the Vedas and their Angas included all the literature and sciences of the country—grammar, versification, arithmetic, and mathematics—the law thus effectually enjoined ignorance to the rest of mankind."

For every Brahman in India there are at least twenty members of other castes. All these, according to Hinduism, are doomed, more or less, to ignorance. God has not limited intellectual gifts to one small section of the community. If learning is confined to the few, the rich talents which may exist in the many are undeveloped.

The injurious effect of the above course is most felt in the case of women. There were no girls' schools in India before they were opened by Christian Missionaries. Even in 1881 only 231,000 females out of 100 millions were able to read and write. Uneducated mothers cannot bring up their children properly, and they suffer in many ways.

2. *The more Hindu books are studied, the more false notions are acquired.* Hindu geography asserts that the earth is made up of seven circular islands or continents, separated by seas of salt water, sugar-cane juice, wine, curds, milk, &c. In the centre is the golden Mount Meru, 84,000 yojanas in height. Agastya is said to have swallowed the ocean, and given it out salt. According to Hindu astronomy, the sun is nearer to the earth than the moon. The moon waxes and wanes on account of the curse of Daksha. Eclipses of the sun and moon are said to be caused by the severed head of the Asura, Rahu, seeking to grasp them. Hindu history abounds with the most incredible events. Hindu religious books describe gods who never existed.

4. Intellectual Weakness.

It is admitted that among the Hindus there have been some men of great genius; but in every case there has been an element of weakness. The poetry of the Ramayana is disfigured by most outrageous statements. A learned writer on the Nyaya philosophy begins his book with the adoration of Krishna, as "the seed of the tree of the universe," and as "the stealer of the clothes of the young Gopis."

The following illustration may be given in proof of the above:

1. *Men steeped in Hinduism are narrow-minded bigots.*—In general, they are the greatest enemies of social reform, and

despise all other knowledge but their own. As a Bengali writer remarks, "Some of them have a little dexterity in threading the dreams of metaphysics, and the unenviable ability of framing specious arguments for perplexing the plainest truths."

2. *The most extravagant fables are accepted as true.*—One or two examples may be given. Hanuman, the monkey god, is believed to have been able to hurl rocks, remove mountains, and put the sun under his arm-pit. King Sagara is said to have had 60,000 sons born in a pumpkin! The people of India are naturally intelligent, but that they should believe such monstrous stories shows a childish stage of intellect.

3. *Hindus are guided by custom—not by reason.*—"We must walk according to custom," is the saying everywhere. "Custom," says the learned Pandit Vidyasagar, "is the supreme ruler in this country." The lower animals must walk according to custom. Though they think a little, they cannot reason from experience so as to be able to judge which course they ought to follow. But men should not set aside reason, and behave like sheep or oxen.

The lower animals act now as they did thousands of years ago, so the Hindus have maintained a stationary condition of semi-civilization. Professor Bhandarkar says, "Indian implements and arts are now in the condition in which they were in the time of Manu." On the other hand, *progress* is the watchword of Western civilization.

4. *India represents the childhood of civilization.*—Babu Hiralal Haldar, M.A., says:

"The chief characteristics of an infant are its utter helplessness and dependence on others for support. The infant has no idea of personality. It cannot depend for anything on itself, and has no sense of responsibility. A careful inquiry into Indian civilization will reveal these characteristics.

"In the Hindu social system, want of regard to personality is most conspicuous. The head of the family is the sole authority in all domestic affairs. Nay, he is more. He is the keeper of the consciences of the members of the family. It is he who decides what is right or wrong for them. All the members of the family must slavishly submit to the dictates of the autocratic patriarch of the family."

5. Injurious Political Effects.

1. *The Growth of Nationality has been hindered.*—A new feeling of nationality is springing up among educated Indians, but this is in direct opposition to Hinduism. The "National Congresses," regarded with enthusiasm, would be impossible under Manu's caste regulations. Sudras compose the great majority of the population; but if they had presumed to attend and sit in the

presence of the "twice-born," banishment and mutilation would have been the reward of their presumption.

2. *The country has become an easy prey to foreign Invaders.*—The Romans had a maxim, "Divide and conquer." The Brahmans acted on the same principle. By splitting up the people into numerous sections, they more easily retained their supremacy. "A nation divided against itself," is the proper description of the Hindu race."

6. Despotism and Religious Intolerance.

1. *Despotism.*—Bholanath Chunder says of the Oriental mind:—

"It has never known, nor attempted to know any other form of Government but despotism. . . Though the most important of all branches of human knowledge, politics have never engaged the attention of the people of the East. They have never studied the theory and practice of constitutional government. They have never conceived anything like republicanism. They have never understood emancipation from political servitude. They have never known what is a covenant between the subject and the sovereign."*

According to Manu, "Because a king is formed from parts of these chiefs of the gods, therefore he excels in glory all beings." "He is a powerful divinity in man's form." (vii. 5, 8.)

A Hindu Raja regarded his kingdom as his private estate, the revenues of which he might spend as he pleased. Without trial, under the influence of passion or caprice, he could order a man to be beheaded or to be trampled to death by elephants.

All this continued for three thousand years. It is only within this century that the British Government is getting the system abolished in Native States.

2. **Religious Intolerance.**—Toleration means *allowing by not hindering*. Religious toleration is allowing a person to profess any religion which he believes to be true. **Intolerance** means the opposite.

Hinduism is, at once, most tolerant and intolerant. It will allow a man to be an atheist, theist, polytheist, pantheist; he may worship anything in the heaven above or in the earth beneath, or nothing. He may charge God with the greatest crimes or he may deny His existence. He may be guilty of lying, theft, adultery, murder; but so long as he observes the rules of his caste, he may live in his own home unmolested, and have free admission to Hindu temples. But let him visit England to study, let him marry a widow, dine with a person of another caste, or even take a glass of water from his hand, and, according to Hinduism, he is excommunicated.

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* *Travels of a Hindu*, Vol. II., pp. 408, 409.

Hinduism, however, reserves its greatest intolerance for the man who becomes a Christian. Hindus are then up in arms and make the most intolerant speeches, and do the most intolerant deeds. They are ready to call down the curses of all the gods upon those who have been instrumental in the conversion. They invoke the aid of the law and employ all its machinery to crush them; they are even willing in some cases to do to death the man who has dared to think for himself and to act up to his convictions. These things show that under the seeming toleration of the Hindu lurks a spirit of most bitter intolerance.

Hindus urge that to embrace Christianity breaks up their families. Whose fault is this? It belongs to Hinduism, and to Hinduism alone. The Christian would gladly stay if Hindus would let him stay and be true to his convictions and loyal to his God. Is he to be faithful first to his earthly or his heavenly Father? Had he become an atheist or immoral he would have been allowed to remain; but now, although he may be more affectionate and purer than ever before, he is driven out as evil, and even a mother has been known to curse her son in the name of her gods, simply because he cannot agree with his parents in matters of belief. Hinduism will connive at all manners of wickedness; but a religion of spotless purity is looked upon with abhorrence.

Religious hypocrisy, one of the worst features of educated Hindus, is thus fostered. Men are afraid to avow their beliefs.

7. Caste.

Caste is the distinguishing feature of Hinduism. Its tolerance and intolerance have been shown in the preceding chapter. All beyond the pale of Hinduism are considered impure Mlechhas.

Caste has chiefly reference to food. Hence it has been said that the *stomach is the seat of Hinduism.*

"Other religions may be seated in the mind and soul—but the stronghold of Hinduism is the stomach. A Hindu may retain his faith against all argument, and against all violence, but mix a bit of beef in his food, and his religion is gone! Not that he renounces it, but that it repudiates him. Let half a dozen Hindus seize one of their own caste, and forcibly thrust forbidden food down his throat, and that man has ceased to have any rights in this world or the next."

It is often alleged that caste distinctions are similar to the civil and social distinctions of European and other nations; but there is an essential difference. Indian caste is derived from *birth* alone. It cannot be transferred from one class to another; it cannot be gained as a reward for the highest merit or bestowed as an honorary title by the most powerful monarch. As well might an ass be changed into a horse.

Civil distinctions in Europe were framed by man; caste claims divine origin.

The following are some of the evil effects of caste:

1. *The Brotherhood of Man is denied.*—The common belief of the Hindus is that the Brahmans proceeded from the mouth of the Creator; the Kshatriyas from his arms; the Vaisyas from his legs, and the Sudras from his feet. Instead of regarding each other with love as the children of the same heavenly Father, some are considered so polluted that they are not allowed to come within a certain distance of the so-called high castes.

2. *Gross Injustice between Man and Man.*—A code of laws should be characterised by the strictest justice. According to Manu's Dharma Sastra, "the Self-existent" uttered the following:

Brahmans.

93. Since he sprang from the most excellent part, since he was the first-born, and since he holds the Vedas, the Brahman is, by right, the lord of all this creation.

100. Thus whatever exists in the universe is all the property of the Brahman; for the Brahman is entitled to all by his superiority and eminence of birth.

380. Certainly (the king) should not slay a Brahman even if he be occupied in crime of every sort; but he should put him out of the realm in possession of all his property, and uninjured (in body). Book 1.

Sudras.

413. But a Sudra, whether bought or not bought, (the Brahman) may compel to practise servitude; for that (Sudra) was created by the Self-existent merely for the service of the Brahman.

417. A Brahman may take possession of the goods of a Sudra with perfect peace of mind, for, since nothing at all belongs to this (Sudra) as his own, he is one whose property may be taken away by his master. Book VIII.

125. The leavings of food should be given (him) and the old clothes; so too the blighted part of the grain; so too the old furniture. Book X.

270. If a (man) of one birth assault one of the twice-born castes with virulent words, he ought to have his tongue cut out, for he is of the lowest origin.

281. If a low-born man endeavours to sit down by the side of a high-born man, he should be banished after being branded on the hip, or (the king) may cause his backside to be cut off. Book VIII.

80. One may not give advice to a Sudra, nor (give him) the remains (of food) or (of) butter that has been offered. And one may not teach him the law or enjoin upon him (religious) observances.

81. For he who tells him the law and he who enjoins upon him (religious) observances, he indeed, together with that (Sudra) sinks into the darkness of the hell called Asamvrtta (unbounded). Book IV.

Let any one, after reading the above, say whether caste is founded on truth and justice. It is a system devised by cunning men to enslave their fellow-beings.

3. *Individual Liberty is Crushed.*—Hinduism has its "thousand and one" regulations, nearly all childish and frivolous, and some of them leading to much suffering. Caste has been well described "as the most intolerant and exacting taskmaster that ever placed a yoke on the neck of man." Mr. Ranade compares it to the heavy iron chains with which faqirs sometimes load themselves.

"Does a Brahman," says the *Indu Prakash*, "wish to dine with a man of another caste? However thick friends they may be of one another, caste says, 'No, you must not do that, or you will be excommunicated.' If a Brahman feel thirsty and has no other water but such as is brought by a Sudra near him, he cannot drink it; for caste forbids it at the pain of excommunication." During famines people, dying of hunger, have refused food offered to them by Europeans.

The effects are worst with regard to the denial of *religious* liberty. As already shown, it leads to cowardly religious hypocrisy among the educated, while it has promoted blind bigotry among the masses.

4. *Hostility to Social Reform.*—What are the leading social evils under which India is suffering? The neglect of female education, early marriages, the treatment of widows, and the enormous expenses of caste feasts. Caste lies at the root of all, and is the great obstacle to reform. The following extract is from the *Indu Prakash*:—

"Does a Brahman wish to marry his daughter at a mature and marriageable age? There comes the tyrant caste and says, 'You shall not keep your daughter unmarried beyond the age of 8 or 10, unless you choose to incur the penalty of excommunication.' Does a man wish to countenance either by deed or word the marriage of little girls plunged into life-long misery and degrading widowhood? Caste says, 'No, you will be excommunicated.' Does a man wish to dispense with any of the unmeaning and idolatrous ceremonies with which Native society is hampered? Caste says, 'No, you will be excommunicated.'"

5. *Divine Sanction is claimed for an iniquitous Lie.*—The Brahmans are said to have issued from the mouth of Brahma, the Kshatriyas from his arms, the Vaisyas from his thighs, the Sudras from his feet. Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gítá, says: "The fourfold division of castes was created by me." Such is the supposed origin of a system which Sir H. S. Maine, in *Ancient Law*, justly describes as "The most disastrous and blighting of human institutions." Principal Caird says: "It involves the worst of all wrongs to humanity—that of hallowing evil by the authority and sanction of religion."

Keshub Chunder Sen says in an "Appeal to Young India":—

"That Hindu caste is a frightful social scourge no one can deny. It has completely and hopelessly wrecked social unity, harmony, and happiness, and for centuries it has opposed all social progress. But few seem to think that it is not so much as a social but as a religious institution that it has become the great scourge it really is. As a system of absurd social distinctions, it is certainly pernicious. But when we view it on moral grounds it appears as a scandal to conscience, and an insult to humanity, and all our moral ideas and sentiments rise to execrate it, and to demand its immediate extermination. Caste is the bulwark of Hindu idolatry and the safeguard of Brahminical priesthood. It is an audacious and sacrilegious violation of God's law of human brotherhood. It makes civil distinctions inviolable divine institutions, and in the name of the Holy God sows perpetual discord and enmity among His children! It exalts one section of the people above the rest, gives the former, under the seal of divine sanction, the monopoly of education, religion and all the advantages of social pre-eminence, and invests them with the arbitrary authority of exercising a tyrannical sway over unfortunate and helpless millions of human souls, trampling them under their feet and holding them in a state of miserable servitude. It sets up the Brahminical order as the very vicegerents of the Deity and stamps the mass of the population as a degraded and unclean race, unworthy of manhood and unfit for heaven."

8. Degradation and Cruel Treatment of Women.

The strong generally seek to tyrannise over the weak. Among savages, women do all the hard work: men, when not fighting or hunting, are smoking, drinking, or sleeping. Hindus have reached a higher state of civilisation; but in their treatment of women they display much of the same spirit. Men, for their own selfish ends, have, from early times, taught women in India to surrender all their rights, and to submit themselves in every way to the wishes of their lords and masters.

The denial of education was a grievous wrong inflicted upon all women. It was the crowning device of Hinduism. So long as women were kept in ignorance, they would swallow the most astounding fables regarding the power of the Brahmans, and be eager to carry out every superstitious observance which was enjoined.

It is true that women are commanded to be honoured; but it is for selfish reasons, by those who "desire prosperity" or "wealth." Manu says:

"Women are to be honoured and adorned by fathers and brothers, by husbands, as also by brothers-in-law who desire much prosperity."

"Therefore they are ever to be honoured at ceremonies and festivals, with ornaments, clothes, and food, by men who desire wealth." III. 59.

Alleged Evil Qualities.—An English traveller was told in India that Hindus agreed only in two things: "the sanctity of cows

and the depravity of women." In the Rig Veda the following is put in the mouth of Indra: "Indra himself hath said, The mind of woman brooks not discipline. Her intellect hath little weight." viii. 33, 17.

Manu is much worse:

"The bed, the seat, adornment, desire, wrath, deceitfulness, proneness to injure and bad morals, Manu (the Creator) ordained for women." IX. 17.

The first three imply love of sleep, laziness, and vanity. It is blasphemously asserted that all these evil qualities are ordained by the Creator!

Women always to be under Control.—Manu says:

"Day and night should women be kept by the male members of the family in a state of dependence. In pursuits to which they are too devoted they should be restrained under the husband's power.

"The father guards them in childhood, the husband guards them in youth, in old age the sons guard them. A woman ought not to be in a state of independence." IX. 2, 3.

Authority to Chastise.—At a meeting in Calcutta on "Hindu Marriage Customs" the saying was quoted: "Strike not, even with a blossom, a wife guilty of a hundred faults." Manu, the highest authority, on the contrary, has the following:

"A wife, son, slave, pupil, and own brother should, when they have committed faults, be beaten with a cord or a bamboo cane.

But on the back of the body (only), never on a noble part: if one should smite them on any other part than that, he would incur the sin of a thief." VIII. 299, 300.

The Husband like the Wife's God.—Manu says:

"Though of bad conduct or debauched, or even devoid of (good) qualities, a husband must always be served like a god by a good wife." IX. 154.

No Religious Duties for Women.—Manu says:

"For women there is no separate sacrifice, nor vow, nor even fast; if a woman obeys her husband, by that she is exalted in heaven.

"No religious ceremony for women should be (accompanied) by *mantras* (except marriage),—with these words the rule of right is fixed; for women being weak creatures, and having no (share in the) *mantras*, are falsehood itself. So stands the law." IX. 18.

The following is from the Skanda Purána:

"Let a wife who wishes to perform sacred oblations, wash the feet of her lord, and drink the water; for a husband is to a wife greater than Siva or Vishnu. The husband is her god, her priest, and religion; wherefore abandoning everything else, she ought chiefly to worship her husband." IV. 35.

stay with husband

Indian Widows.—One peculiarity of India is the very large proportion of widows. In 1881 they numbered nearly 24 millions. About every fifth female in the country is a widow, while only one in twenty of the males is a widower.

There are two causes of this: *viz.*, early marriage and the strong feeling among the higher castes against widow marriage. As the so-called lower caste have a tendency to ape the customs of the higher, the prejudice against widow marriage exists among many of them likewise.

The treatment of widows varies in different families. If they have the good fortune to be in their fathers' houses, their lot is less miserable; but, as a rule, they have to spend the rest of their days in the houses of their fathers-in-law, where, in addition to their other sufferings, they are often treated as domestic drudges.

The late distinguished Sanskrit scholar, Pandit Iswara Chandra Vidyasagara, says in his *Appeal on the Marriage of Hindu Widows*:

"An adequate idea of the intolerable hardships of early widowhood can be formed by those only whose daughters, sisters, daughters-in-law and other female relations have been deprived of their husbands during infancy."

The young widow must wear a coarse dress, and have no ornaments. The *ekadasi* fast must be strictly observed for 24 hours twice a month. Her sight is a bad omen on a festive occasion; her touch is pollution. Instead of being comforted she is told, "You were a most sinful being in your previous births; you have therefore been widowed already." In some cases the results are prostitution and fœticide.

The barbarous treatment of women in India reached its climax in widow burning. That sons should roast their mothers alive when they became widows, seems too horrible an idea to enter the mind. Yet Hindus, in the 19th century, contended earnestly for the privilege.

To induce widows to submit to death in this cruel manner, life was made bitter to them in every conceivable way. This, however, was not sufficient, so they were told that they would not only be pre-eminently virtuous, but enjoy happiness for almost endless ages in another world if they burnt themselves with the dead bodies of their husbands.

"The wife who commits herself to the flames with her husband's corpse, shall equal Arundhati and reside in Swarga."

"Accompanying her husband she shall reside so long in Swarga as there are 35 millions of hairs on the human body."

The consequences of not observing this injunction are thus stated:

"As long as a woman shall not burn herself after the death of her husband, she shall be subject to transmigration in a female form."

Not a few widows, on account of the false hopes held out to them and to escape a life of wretchedness, consented to "eat fire." In the year 1817 it was found that, on an average, two widows were burnt alive in Bengal every day.

In 1829, Lord William Bentinck, after suitable inquiries, passed a regulation declaring the practice of Sati illegal and punishable in the criminal courts. The Hindus got up a memorial to Government, affirming that the act of immolation was not only a sacred duty, but an exalted privilege, and denouncing the regulation as a breach of the promise that there should be no interference with the religious customs of the Hindus.

9. Man reduced to the Level of the Brute.

According to Hinduism, all living creatures are alike eternal, but passing through endless births. "I am now an intelligent man, but soon I may be a chattering monkey; I am now a tender-hearted woman; but ere long I may be a ravening wolf. I am now a studious boy, but next year I may be a stupid buffalo. I am now a playful girl, but after my next birth, I may be a skipping goat. That querulous crow may be my deceased father; that hungry cat my own departed mother; that raging bear my guardian brother; and that crawling serpent, my late sister. Bringing up brutes to the level of man, has brought down man to the level of brutes."

Manu makes the atonement for killing a Sudra the same as for killing the following animals:

132. "On killing a cat, an ichneumon, a daw, or a frog, a dog, a lizard, an owl, or a crow, he should practice the observance (ordained for) killing a Sudra." Book XI.

10. Polytheism.

Monotheism is a belief in the existence of one God only; *polytheism* is a belief in many gods. Hinduism is decidedly polytheistic. One of the hymns of the Rig-Veda concludes thus: "Glory to gods, the mighty and the lesser, glory to gods the younger and the elder." They are generally spoken of the Vedas as thrice-eleven. Agni is thus addressed: "Agni, bring hither, according to thy wont, and gladden the three and thirty gods with their wives." In another hymn they are mentioned as much more numerous. "Three hundred, three thousand, thirty and nine gods have worshipped Agni."

The same god is sometimes represented as supreme, sometimes as equal, sometimes as inferior to others. The father is sometimes the son, the brother is the husband, and she who in one hymn is the mother is in another the wife.

The popular idea now is that the gods and goddesses amount to thirty-three crores in number.

It is alleged that all the gods are the same though worshipped under different names.

Take the three principal gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva: their residences, wives, and children are all different. Brahma is said to live in Satya-loka, his wife is Savitrí; Vishnu lives in Vaikuntha, his wife is Lakshmí; Siva lives in Kailása, his wife is said to be Parvatí. Different dispositions and actions are ascribed to these gods. Several times they are said to have fought with each other.

If the 33 crores of the Hindu gods are all the same, it may as well be said that the 25 crores of people in India, with different houses, wives, children, occupations, are all one. If the gods are one, why are they reckoned as amounting to 33 crores?

This is only an excuse for the folly of polytheism put forward by those who are somewhat more intelligent than the masses. Rammohun Roy says: "The Hindus firmly believe in the real existence of innumerable gods and goddesses who possess in their own departments full and independent powers, and to propitiate them, and not the true God, are temples erected and ceremonies performed."

The Hindus themselves call their religions by the name of the particular deity they worship, as *Siva Bhakti*, *Vishnu Bhakti*, &c. The vast majority would be indignant at the supposition that their own religions and the detested heresy of their opponents, are after all the same.

Sir Monier-Williams says of the Hindus:

"There is not an object in heaven or earth which a Hindu is not prepared to worship—sun, moon, and stars; rocks, stocks, and stones; trees, shrubs, and grass; sea, pools, and rivers; his own implements of trade; the animals he finds most useful, the noxious reptiles he fears, men remarkable for any extraordinary qualities—for great valour, sanctity, virtue or even vice; good and evil demons, ghosts, and goblins, the spirits of departed ancestors; an infinite number of semi-human and semi-divine existences, inhabitants of the seven upper and the seven lower worlds—each and all come in for a share of divine honours or a tribute of more or less adoration."*

"These be thy gods, O India!" There is, however, one Being whom the Hindu does not worship—the one true God, the great Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the Universe.

Educated Hindus and Idolatry.—Many educated Hindus take part in idolatrous rites, pretending that they are harmless customs, kept up by female influence, and that they conform to them simply to avoid giving offence.

An intelligent educated man countenancing idolatry is guilty in the following respects:

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* *Religious Thought and Life in India*, p. 350.

1. *Of cowardly hypocrisy.*—Insincere and faithless observance of the rites of religion *must* be degrading and destructive to everything that is best and noblest in human nature. Religion is thus made a huge hypocrisy, from the want of courage and honesty.

2. *Of cruelty to his relations and countrymen.*

Women are the chief supporters of idolatry in India. Poor creatures they do not know better. Those who are mainly responsible for it and to be blamed are the educated men, who by their example encourage them in error. The women of India are naturally both intelligent and affectionate. If their husbands, instead of behaving as at present, would lovingly teach them to worship their great Father in heaven instead of idols, the reign of superstition would soon come to an end. The change is so reasonable as easily to be understood. It is so simple that it may be made intelligible even to a child.

3. *Of high treason against God.*

11. Animal Worship.

Few sights are more pitiable than that of a man bowing down to a brute, yet animal worship has always prevailed among rude and half-civilised nations in every part of the earth.

Egypt is a country watered by the river Nile, about midway between India and England. The ancient Egyptians were noted for their animal worship. The cow, ox, dog, cat, mungoose, a bird called the ibis, hawks and crocodiles were especially considered sacred. They were treated with the greatest respect. Rich carpets and ornamental furniture were provided for them; they were fed with the choicest food. Vows were made to them for the recovery of health, for the gift of male children, or the gain of some other object. When one of them died, the grief of the people could only be equalled by that felt at the loss of a son. The dead animal was wrapt in linen, and carried to the embalmers, attended by a procession of persons of both sexes, beating their breasts in token of grief. The body was then prepared with oil of cedar and spices to preserve it, and placed in a sacred tomb. On the death of a cat, the mourners shaved their eye-brows, and their whole body on the loss of a dog.

Some of the wild tribes of India worship the tiger. Serpent worship is common. The deadly cobra is especially reverenced. The monkey worship of the aborigines was adopted by the Brahmans, who made Hanumán the son of Váyu.

By some Hindus the cow is reverenced weekly; others have an annual ceremony in its honour. The prayer is sometimes offered: "O mother, be gracious to us. Bless us with a rich harvest; let our land bring forth increase. We are thy humble servants."

The Hindus have reached the lowest depth of degradation in

animal worship. The very excrements of the cow are sacred. Her urine is the best of all holy waters—a sin-destroying liquid which purifies every thing it touches. Cow dung is supposed to be of equal efficacy. The ashes produced by burning this hallowed substance, are of such a holy nature, that they have only to be sprinkled over a sinner to convert him into a saint. To swallow a pill composed of the five products of the cow will even purify a man from the foul pollution contracted by a visit to England.

12. Idolatry.

Idolatry is the worship of God through images. Savages usually worship a stone or some object in its natural condition. Nations, half civilised, generally have images. The change from a stone to an idol may be very slight. A few chips or daubs of paint suffice to change the rude block into an idol. It may be said of India, "the land is full of idols." They are found in nearly every Hindu dwelling.

Various excuses are made for idolatry.

Some say that idols are only to remind the ignorant of God. If a son kept an image of a pig to remind him of his father, would this be right? would the father be pleased? It is infinitely worse to make an image of God.

But it is not true to say that idols are only to remind men of God. When a Hindu buys an idol or gets one made, he has the *pran pratishtha* ceremony performed, by which he believes that its nature is changed, and that it acquires not only life, but supernatural powers.

Statues of great men and women are often made by Europeans; but there is no *pran pratishtha* ceremony, nor are they worshipped.

Another excuse is that idolatry is allowable for the ignorant.

To this it is replied, how is it that every Muhammadan in Turkey and every Protestant Christian from the highest to the lowest, can worship God without images? The ignorant do not need images to remind them of God. They cannot understand His form for He has none. They can remember their parents when far distant; they can love a benefactor whom they have never seen; they can obey the authority of a Queen-Empress though she never set foot on their soil. They can worship God who is a Spirit in spirit and in truth. Idols are a hindrance, not a help, to true worship. They give most degrading ideas of God.

Degrading Effects of Idolatry.—Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gítá: "The mind by continually meditating on a material object becomes materialized." People who worship senseless images end by becoming like them. They are deceived and cheated by their

religious teachers in every possible way; but they do not see through the fraud.

God is self-existent, unchangeable, infinite in power, wisdom, goodness and mercy, spotless in holiness. Who are worshipped in His stead? Senseless blocks, blind, deaf, and dumb beasts, birds and creeping things, the obscene linga, and supposed deities stained with every vice.

13. Pantheism.

Pantheism is a belief that the universe, as a whole, is God. It is expressed in the well known formula from the Chhándogya Upanishad, *ekam evádvitíyam*, "One only without a second." This has been adopted by some Hindu religious reformers as teaching monotheism; but its real meaning is, not that there is only one God, but that there is no second any thing—a totally different doctrine.

Hindus are at once pantheists and polytheists. Every one admits that there is only one God, but he worships others all the same.

The *mahávakya*, or great sentence of Vedantism, is *Tat twam asi*, "That art Thou," or *Aham Brahmasmi*, "I am Brahma." For a sinful, miserable mortal to use such language is blasphemy. We are as different from God as light is from darkness.

If a man is Brahma, so is a dog, a cat, a pig, a musquito. If all this universe is Brahma, then it must be held that Brahma commits sin, that he steals, tells lies, and is guilty of murder, for men do such things. God is made the author of all sin, and so He must be a being infinitely worse, instead of infinitely better, than ourselves.

It is true that God is everywhere; but that is quite different from saying that God *is* everything. If it is held that Brahma and the world are the same, then there is no difference between the Creator and the creature, between the potter and the pots he makes.

Our consciousness assures us that we are personal beings, different from everything around us and from our Creator. We also feel a personal responsibility for our actions.

Brahma is said to be *akhand*, indivisible: how then can he be divided?

A Hindu writer justly says:

"Thou art verily rifled of thy understanding, because like a maniac thou constantly ravest, 'I am Brahma.' Where is thy divinity, thy sovereignty, thy omniscience? O thou animal soul! thou art as different from Brahma as is a mustard seed from Mount Meru. Thou art a finite soul, He is infinite. Thou canst occupy but one space at a time, He is always everywhere. Thou art momentarily happy or miserable, He is happy at all times. How canst thou say 'I am He?' Hast thou no shame?"

Pantheism strikes at the root of all religious feeling. The

essence of religion is to love, honour and obey God, to pray to Him, to worship Him. If I am God, why should I worship myself?

The more intelligent pantheists in India look upon the popular deities as mere fictions of the popular mind. Their association with polytheism, says Flint, "means a conscious alliance with falsehood, the deliberate propagation of lies, a persistent career of hypocrisy. Pantheism, instead of elevating and purifying Hindu polytheism, has contributed to increase the number, the absurdity, and the foulness of its superstitions."

14. Debasing Ideas of God.

The Mahábhárata truly says:

> "Contradictory are the Vedas; contradictory are the Sastras; contradictory all the doctrines of the holy sages."

Hinduism gives sublime descriptions of God, mixed with others of the most opposite character. In the Bhagavad Gítá, Krishna is called the "holiest of the holy": in the Bhagavata Purána he is represented as stained with crime. The general teaching of Hinduism has rather to be considered than single expressions here and there.

Brahma, in his ordinary condition, is represented as *nirguna*, unfettered by action. He exists in a state of dreamless repose. The *nirguna* Brahma is a being without mercy or love. He neither sees, nor hears, nor knows, nor cares about any of his creatures; he has neither the power nor the will to do good or evil—to reward the righteous or punish the wicked. It is useless to present a petition which is not read; it is as vain to worship a being represented as in a state of unconscious slumber. Hence, throughout the whole of India, there is not a single temple dedicated to Brahma.

But Brahma does not always continue in this *nirguna* state. After the lapse of unnumbered ages, he awakes. Becoming conscious of his own existence, and dissatisfied with his own solitariness, a desire for duality arises in his mind. Though himself devoid of form, he, in sport, imagines a form. How desire arises in this unconscious being is a question which never has been answered.

It is asserted that Brahma is *nirvikára*, incapable of change. How is this statement consistent with the other statement that he exists alternately in a *saguna* and a *nirguna* state? How can he who is essentially immutable become sometimes void of qualities and sometimes endued with qualities?

The three qualities which Brahma, in his *saguna* state, possesses are *sattva*, truth, *rajas*, passion, a longing for worldly pleasure, and *tamas*, darkness. Prahláda is represented, in the Vishnu Purána, as thus addressing Vishnu: "Thou art knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood, poison and ambrosia."

Hinduism has no correct ideas of holiness. Indra, the chief god of the Vedas, was notorious for his drunkenness, yet he is called in the Rig-Veda "the holiest of the holy." In one of the Bráhmanas he is thus invoked : "O adulterous lover of Ahalyá." These words are used as an endearing appellation, and this act of adultery is supposed to be a matter of glory to him.

Brahmá, Vishnu, and Siva are nowhere regarded in the Sastras as holy beings. On the contrary, they are all described as stained with great crimes. The way in which Brahmá is said to have taken five heads is too filthy to be described. Brahmá, Vishnu, and Siva are said to have been changed into children for their misconduct with Atri's wife. To break the austerities of the wife of Bhrigu, Vishnu cut off her head. Bhrigu consequently cursed him, to seven births among mortals. The conduct of Vishnu as Krishna, is well known. Siva is said to have been notorious for his drunkenness and love of bhang. He was ready to part with all the merit he had acquired by his austerities in order to gratify his evil desires but once with Mohiní.

Power is the great attribute worshipped by Hindus. Just as wicked and cruel despots are feared and honoured, so gods and demons are worshipped whatever may be their character, provided they will refrain from injuring or confer some benefit on their devotees. The gods of Hinduism act like Indian rajas, contending with each other for power, each favouring his own party, and indulging in every vice or committing any crime his evil heart may desire. The Hindu gods reflect the national character.

15. The Sanction of Robbery, Murder, and Human Sacrifices.

The example of the gods may be pleaded for nearly every crime. It is estimated that about three-fourths of the Hindus in Bengal are worshippers of Kálí or Durgá. She is supposed to delight in blood. There are few Hindu women in Bengal who have not vowed, when their husbands or children were sick, to offer some of their blood to the goddess. Hook swinging and piercing the body with iron rods are supposed to be acceptable worship.

There was a class of men, called Thugs, who declared that Kálí had given them permission to strangle men and take their property. She was supposed to direct all their movements and protect them.

In the Rig-Veda, Sunahsepa is represented as tied to a post to be offered in sacrifice to Varuna. The Purushamedha required the sacrifice of men. The Bráhmanas sanction human sacrifices. The Káliká Purána says : "By a human sacrifice attended by the forms laid down, Deví remains gratified for a thousand years." A human sacrifice is described as *atibali*, the highest sacrifice.

Down to the present time nearly every year cases of this kind come to light. It is generally believed by the ignorant that the English were able to build bridges across the Ganges only by offering human sacrifices. Mothers used to offer children in sacrifice to the Ganges. Widows were sometimes burnt alive till it was forbidden by the British Government.

16. Denial of the Eternal Distinction between Right and Wrong.

This is implied in the saying, "To the mighty there is no sin." What would be wrong in us, was right in Krishna. The *Jívanmukta* is to look with equal eye upon virtue and vice, purity and impurity. In the Bhagavad Gítá, Arjuna is told by Krishna that looking upon pleasure and pain as alike, he would not incur sin though he killed his relations in battle. Krishna says, "Actions defile me not."

The idea is taken from a Hindu despot, who could do anything he liked,—take the wives of his subjects or put them to death without trial, no one daring to find fault. This was the usual character of their sovereigns, and when the Hindus manufactured gods they took them as a model. Their gods are deified men.

The principle that the gods are not to be condemned for wrong-doing is the opposite of the truth. If a child commit a fault, he is blamed; if an ordinary man do the same, his guilt is greater; if a king does it, the guilt and evil consequences would be still greater. Krishna himself says in the Bhagavad Gítá: "Whatever the most excellent practise, other men practise likewise; the world follows whatever example they set." Krishna's own example, as related in the Bhagavat Purána, has had a most pernicious effect upon his worshippers.

To say that the gods committed sin "in sport" or as a "divine amusement," only makes matters worse. Such an idea is blasphemous.

The Hindu doctrine of *karma* has a most injurious effect. People are taught to believe that they cannot act otherwise than they do. In the Puránas, again and again, persons guilty of the greatest crimes are comforted by Krishna on the ground that whereas all was fixed by their *karma*, they were guilty of no fault. It is the constant excuse for every thing bad, "What can we do? It was our *karma*." Even condemned murderers often view their sin with indifference.

Men, in their dealings with each other, do not accept such an excuse. Does a thief get off because he said that Brahmá had written on his forehead that he was to steal? We know that he was not forced to steal; but did it of his own free will, and that he deserves to be punished.

Suppose a wicked son laid the blame of his misconduct on his wise and good father, saying that he had only done what he made him do; would such an excuse be accepted? It would be known to be false, and, instead of lessening his guilt, would only increase it. So it is a great sin to lay the blame of our bad actions upon God, who is of spotless holiness, and abhors sin.

Our consciences tells us that our sins are our own, and not God's or fate's.

17. Worthless Means prescribed for the Pardon of Sin.

Sin is breaking the commands of the great Lord of the Universe. Many think lightly of it, but it exposes us to the severest punishment. Every man who reflects seriously upon his life must acknowledge that he has sinned numberless times in thought, word, and deed. The most important question we can ask is, How can we be just with God? How can we be delivered from this terrible burden of sin?

Hinduism is contradictory in its answer to this question. Properly speaking, there is no pardon of sin: according to *karma*, the fruit of every action, good or evil, must be reaped. Sankar Acharya said that even Brahmá could not alter destiny. On the other hand, it is taught that the greatest sins may be removed by the most inadequate means.

Some trust to almsgiving. It is our duty to assist the deserving poor, and God commands us to do it. But much of Hindu charity is given to able-bodied beggars, too lazy to work, and given up to vice. This is not true charity, but the encouragement of wickedness. In any case almsgiving will not atone for sin. If a thief is brought before a judge, will he be pardoned because he has given some pice to beggars?

Going on pilgrimages is another supposed way of obtaining pardon of sin. Instead of sin being thus decreased, it is increased. At great places of pilgrimage, sins are committed which the fear of discovery would prevent at home. Water may cleanse the body, but it cannot purify the soul. Pilgrimages neither atone for sin, nor make the heart holy.

Torturing the body, as suspending one's self with the head downwards, sitting in circles of fire, &c., is practised by some to obtain the pardon of sin and acquire merit. Do these persons become holy? It is notorious that many sannyásis are addicted to some of the worst vices.

Other modes of obtaining pardon, mentioned in the Sastras, are equally useless.

The Padma Purána says:

"He who carries in his body a drop of water in which a Brahman's toe has been washed, gets all his sins immediately destroyed."

The Mahábhárata says :

"He who contemplates the Ganges, while walking, sitting, sleeping, thinking of other things, awake, eating, breathing and conversing, is delivered from all sins."

The Bhágavat says that, "a person pronouncing loudly 'reverence to Hari,' even involuntarily, in the state of falling down, of slipping, of labouring under illness, or of sneezing, purifies himself from the foulest crimes."

The Vishnu Dharm Tantra says, "As without knowledge fire burns when anything touches it, so the name of Vishnu, even without knowledge, burns up all sins."

Hence the Hindus give their sons the names of their gods, under the idea that merit will be acquired even when calling them for any purpose. The story as told that Ajamila, who had killed cows and Brahmans and lived in the practice of evil all his days, was taken to heaven, because in the hour of death he called on his son Náráyana to give him some water.

Among the heinous sins requiring *prayaschitta* is that of going to England. Giving a widowed daughter in marriage or marrying a widow are crimes equally great. The great means of purification is swallowing the five products of the cow, and giving presents to Brahmans. The last is indispensable, and will cover all sins, if sufficient in amount.

To any thoughtful man the inadequacy of the means for the removal of sin is apparent. It has been admitted by Hindus themselves. One writer says : "He whose heart is not pure will not be clean though he should get his body rubbed with mud as much as would form a mountain, and bathe in the Ganges as long as his life would last."

18. Holiness of Life is not Promoted.

We not only require to have past sins forgiven, but to have the heart purified, and to lead holy lives in future. If a religion is true and from God, it will encourage virtue and good morals. The religion which does not teach these is worse than useless. All men are inclined to evil; to incline them to virtue, various helps and encouragements are required.

It is true that Indian literature contains a large amount of moral teaching, some of which is excellent; but this moral teaching is totally unconnected with religious worship. Religion and Morality are divorced. Books containing moral precepts may be studied at home, but in the temple they are unknown. Religion is considered as something apart from the moral conduct of a person. He may be mean, selfish, untruthful, immoral, he may cheat his neighbour or rob poor widows, yet if he perform a certain

number of ceremonies, or spends some hours of the day in meditation, he is considered to be a pious man, certain of obtaining heaven.

Hindu worship on festival nights consists merely in drumming and shouting, in flags, and guns and fire-works, in the dragging of the idol car by tumultuous noisy crowds, in singing and dancing, in all sorts of shows, noises, and riots. When this worship is being performed, no instruction is ever given in the duties of life. The discharge of these duties is never represented as enjoined by the gods. No prayers are offered by the worshippers to enable them to discharge these duties aright.

While there is nothing in Hindu worship to purify the heart, there is much having a contrary influence. Connected with many of the temples in Orissa and South India, there are dancing-girls, called *devadasis*, handmaidens of the gods. These avowed prostitutes take a prominent part in Hindu religious worship.

The Penal Code contains a law against obscene pictures and sculptures. Hindu temples require to be specially exempted from its operation. At the Holi festival it is thought the more obscenity the more merit.

There are plenty of religious beggars who wander about, not unfrequently cheating poor innocent people out of their money: do any of them assemble the people and teach them the way to become virtuous? Instructors of the people in righteousness are nowhere to be met with amongst Hindus.

The example of the gods themselves, instead of promoting morality, has a contrary effect. Indeed, it must be acknowledged that the conduct of the Hindus is often better than that of their gods. The Rishis are always represented as passionate. They knew how to curse, but neither how to use kind speech nor how to instruct meekly. One reason why the people of this country have sunk into immorality is through the worship of immoral gods. According to the Sástras themselves, it was when those gods were invented that the Kali Yuga commenced.

Persons desirous of obtaining *mukti*, give themselves up to the study of treatises on what is called *Jnana*, or spiritual wisdom. These works do not enforce the duty of living virtuously. They assert, on the contrary, that both sin and virtue are delusions, which proceed from spiritual ignorance alone. Where such madness is accepted as "wisdom," morality must perish.

It may be said that there are many Christians who lead wicked lives as well as Hindus; so that their religions are much the same. There is this great difference. The Hindu who leads an immoral life, or is guilty of other crimes, only imitates the example of his gods; while the Christian does the opposite.*

* This section is chiefly abridged from Bishop Caldwell's *Three Way-Marks of Religion.*

19. False Fears through Life.

Men are often their own tormentors. They suffer more from their own misconduct or folly than from all other causes put together. Most Hindus are kept in constant fear and put to great expense to protect themselves from dangers which are wholly imaginary.

Hinduism does not regard God as a loving Father in heaven, wishing to do good to His children. On the contrary, the gods are thought to be like capricious and cruel despots, who must be propitiated to guard against their anger from supposed neglect.

From the earliest times a belief in demons has existed in India. From the cradle to the burning ground, most Hindus are the victims of a kind of disease which may be called the dread of demons. They believe that evil spirits of all kinds are seeking to do them harm in one way or another.

Women are supposed to be specially liable to the attacks of evil spirits. The most favourable hours for them to get possession are at dawn, noon, dusk, and midnight. Of the days of the week, the evil spirits have most influence on Tuesdays and Fridays. Women are afraid, in some parts of the country, to stir out of their houses on those days.

Small-pox is imagined to be caused by Deví, who scatters the seeds of the disease for her amusement. Vaccination is objected to as interfering with her sport. In the south, cholera is popularly supposed to be caused by one of the local Ammans, as Mari-Amman, mother of death, represented by the Brahmans as a form of Kálí. In the north, a new goddess, called Ola Bibi, is thought to preside over the disease.

In addition to the dread of demons, the evil influence of planets is feared. Astrology is the occasion of never-ending expenses, and the fruitful source of anxieties to all classes. Nothing of any importance is done without consulting the astrologer. When a man wishes to have his son married, the astrologer is the only true counsellor and guide. He must fix the fortunate day. Does a man wish to go on a journey? the astrologer must settle the lucky hour.

Omens are a kind of fortune-telling as foolish and as false as astrology. Some omens are taken from birds: crows are favourite prophets. The chirp of the lizard is a certain sign. The ass fitly holds a place. Marriages are sometimes broken off on account of supposed bad omens. Favourable times for commencing an undertaking are lost.

The evil eye is another source of fear. It is supposed that some people, by simply looking at others, have the power of injuring them. It is thought that almost any mischief can follow the

glance of the evil eye. Cattle, fruit gardens, ripe paddy fields, and even a few melons, require protection from it. It is especially dangerous to good-looking children, who must be disfigured by spots or spoken of in a contemptuous way.

To guard against these imaginary evils, charms are worn, mantras are repeated. All these are useless. Mere words have no power. What is considered the strongest charm cannot hurt even a fly. People may trample charms under foot, cut them in pieces, throw them into the fire. If they cannot protect themselves, much less can they protect those who wear them.

Some nations tie charms to their bodies or keep them in cases. The Burmese have them tattooed on their bodies. Some of these charms are supposed to prevent a person from feeling pain when beaten, others guard against danger from snake-bite, musket shots, drowning, &c. It does not matter to the Burmese although persons having tattooed charms are shot or drowned. They still retain their belief in them.

20. Despair or False Hopes at Death.

1. **The Kali Yug.**—In every Indian bazar the expression may be heard almost daily, "This is the Kali Yug." Things are to get worse and worse; people are to become more aud more wicked. The venerable Rishi Parâsara, in the Vishnu Purâna, thus describes some of its evils :—

"The observance of caste, order, and institutes will not prevail in the Kali Age. . . . Men of all degrees will conceit themselves to be equal with Brahmans. Cows will be held in esteem only as they supply milk. The people will be almost always in dread of dearth, and apprehensive of scarcity; they will all live, like anchorites, upon leaves and roots and fruits, and put an end to their lives through fear of famine and want. . . . Princes, instead of protecting, will plunder their subjects. . . . . Women will bear children at the age of five, six, or seven years; and men beget them when they are eight, nine, or ten. A man will be grey when he is twelve; and no one will exceed twenty years of life."*

If this is the Kali Yug, who can resist fate?

2. **Existence a Curse.**—A South India poet thus expresses the Hindu idea of life:

"How many births are past, I cannot tell;
How many yet to come, no man can say;
But this alone I know, and know full well,
That pain and grief embitter all the way."

The dread of continued transmigration is the one haunting thought with the Hindus. The great aim is, not to find truth or to be released from the burden of sin, but how to break this iron

* Wilson's Translation of the Vishnu Purâna, pp. 622, 624.

chain of repeated existences, how to return to complete absorption into pure unconscious spirit.

Ask a Hindu, "What is the chief end of man's existence?" and he will answer *mukti*. Ask him what he means by *mukti*, and he will say that it is to cut short the 84 lakhs of births through which a person may pass.

3. **Despair or False Hopes at Death.**—The only thing a human being knows with certainty about his future lot is that he must die. That inevitable day must come to every one. What are the prospects of a thoughtful Hindu at death? According to the doctrines of *karma*, there is no forgiveness of sin. A man has not merely the transgressions of this life to answer for, but those of countless former births. There may be sins committed in them not yet expiated which may plunge him into some of the terrific hells described in the Puránas.

Hindus, it is true, may die full of hope. Professor Wilson, a great Sanskrit scholar, says: "It matters not how atrocious a sinner may be, if he paints his face, his breast, his arms with certain sectarial marks; or, which is better, if he brands his skin permanently with them with a red hot stamp; if he is constantly chanting hymns in honour of Vishnu; or, what is equally efficacious, if he spends hours in the simple reiteration of his name or names; if he die with the word Hari or Ráma or Krishna on his lips, and the thought of him in his mind, he may have lived a monster of iniquity—he is certain of heaven."

Such a man, however, dies with a lie in his right hand; he is only self-deceived. Instead of being taken up to heaven, he will be dragged down to hell.

A thoughtful Hindu at death may well "meditate terror."

Suppose even that he has good deeds, what are his prospects?

> "The being who is still subject to birth may at one time sport in the beautiful garden of a heavenly world, and at another be cut to a thousand pieces in hell; at one time he may be one of the highest gods and at another a degraded outcast; at one time he may feed on ambrosia and at another he may have molten lead poured down his throat. Alternately he may repose on a couch with the gods and writhe on a bed of red hot iron; become wild with pleasure and then mad with pain; sit on the throne of the gods and then be impaled with hungry dogs around."

Granting, however, that absorption does take place, what does it amount to? Brahm is said to exist in a state of dreamless sleep, without any more thought than a stone. Hindu absorption is practically the same as the Buddhist *nirvana* or annihilation. "Not to be," says Professor Wilson, "is the melancholy result of the religion and philosophy of the Hindus."

Some Hindus, it is true, look for a future conscious existence with Vishnu or Siva; but there are no such beings. Belief in

them is based on the same Purânas which teach the existence of Mount Meru. The one is no more true than the other. What intelligent man can believe in a god supposed to have had wives and children, and to have been stained with crime?

When a Hindu parts with a beloved mother at death, he cannot expect ever to meet her again in consequence of the numberless transmigrations through which she must pass. Here also there is despair, adding to the sorrow.

21. Rebellion against the Rightful Lord of the Universe.

The Queen of England rules over about one-fifth of the earth's surface, and over more than 30 crores of its inhabitants. Throughout all her dominions, it is considered an act of high treason to set up any other sovereign than herself. Such a rebellion would at once be suppressed, and all who took part in it would be punished. People are not at liberty to set up any king they please. It is the same in every well-regulated state. Any other course would be fatal to the welfare of its people.

The British Empire is a very faint emblem of the vast dominions of the great Lord of all. The universe belongs to Him by creation. He spread the heaven above us. He formed the earth beneath us. He is the maker of all things visible and invisible. He first called us into existence. Asleep or awake, we are dependent upon Him for every breath that we draw. It is He who makes the rain to fall and the sun to shine. All that we have is His gift.

The nature of God's laws is an additional reason for obedience. His commands are "Holy, just, and good." He enjoins only what is best for ourselves; He prohibits only that which it is our highest wisdom to shun. Our duty and our happiness coincide.

Just as the Queen of England forbids any one from setting himself up as king within her empire, so does God forbid the worship of any other than Himself. This is His first command. He cannot permit the creatures whom He made to rise in rebellion against Himself.

God is both our Father and our King.

The worship of any other is a defiance of God's authority, a declaration that we will not have Him to rule over us. All the guilt that lies in foul rebellion against the mildest and most merciful of earthly monarchs—in disobeying the kindest and grieving the best of fathers, in ingratitude to a generous benefactor; all this evil, multiplied a thousand times, there is in Hinduism.

And whom do the Hindus worship instead of the one true God, infinite in power, and wisdom, spotlessly holy? Deities stained with every crime. Even brute beasts, senseless blocks, and stones are honoured in preference to the great Creator and rightful Lord of all.

When Hindus stand at death before the judgment seat of the one true God, what answer can they give for their rebellion against His government? They must be speechless.

22. India shows the Powerlessness of its Gods.

"The people of this one country alone," says Bishop Caldwell, "worship as gods, Vishnu, Siva, Krishna, and various similar gods. The very names of these divinities are unknown in every other country.

"Seeing then that Siva, Vishnu and the rest of the Hindu divinities are worshipped as gods by the people of India alone, if they were really gods they would certainly be very gracious to the people of this country. They are always represented in the Purânas as influenced by human friendships and aversions, and, therefore, if they possessed any strength at all, they would certainly give proof of it by abasing the white men who do not worship them, and by exalting their worshippers, the people of this country. They would bestow on the Hindus unbounded wisdom, favour, and prosperity, and would probably commit to them the government of the rest of mankind. Even if the Hindus were not enabled to rule over the rest of the world, the favour of their gods (when zealously worshipped, as they ever have been) might be expected at least to secure to them their own independence. It would surely never become necessary for them to submit to the government of people who pay no regard to Siva or Vishnu.

"How widely different from this is the actual condition of the Hindus! The supreme Government of every part of India has passed into the hands of Christians, who assert that no god exists, and that no god has ever existed, but the God who made the world. May not all reflecting persons conclude from this, that the true God who governs the world is neither Brahmâ, Vishnu, nor Siva, that He is not on the side of the Hindu religion, and that He honours those who honour Him. Since it is evident from the way in which the world is governed that the gods of this country have neither the wish nor the power to save any one, it is evidently the desire of the true God who created the world that people should abandon the worship of those unreal gods."*

23. Estimates of Hinduism.

It has been shown that men who are like frogs in a well are not able to form a correct opinion with regard to religion. Sir William Jones was one of the most learned men that ever came to

* *The Three Way-Marks.*

India, and gave great attention to Sanskrit literature. In the Preface to his translation of Manu's Code, he thus describes it:

"It is a system of despotism and priestcraft, both indeed limited by law, but artfully conspiring to give mutual support, though with mutual checks; it is filled with strange conceits in metaphysics and natural philosophy, with idle superstitions, and with a scheme of theology most obscurely figurative, and consequently liable to dangerous misconception; it abounds with minute and childish formalities, with ceremonies generally absurd and often ridiculous; the punishments are partial and fanciful, for some crimes dreadfully cruel, for others reprehensibly slight; and the very morals, though rigid enough on the whole, are in one or two instances (as in the case of light oaths and of pious perjury) unaccountably relaxed."

It is rightly characterised as a "*system of despotism and priestcraft.*" Macaulay resided several years in India, and was a man of great intelligence. The following is his opinion of Hinduism:

"The great majority of the population of India consist of idolaters, blindly attached to doctrines and rites which, considered merely with reference to the temporal interests of mankind, are in the highest degree pernicious. In no part of the world has a religion ever existed more unfavourable to the moral and intellectual health of our race. The Brahminical mythology is so absurd that it necessarily debases every mind which receives it as truth; and with this absurd mythology is bound up an absurd system of physics, an absurd geography, an absurd astronomy. Nor is this form of Paganism more favourable to art than to science. Through the whole Hindu Pantheon you will look in vain for anything resembling those beautiful and majestic forms which stood in the shrines of ancient Greece. All is hideous, and grotesque, and ignoble. As this superstition is of all superstitions the most irrational, and of all superstitions the most inelegant, so it is of all superstitions the most immoral. Emblems of vice are objects of public worship. Acts of vice are acts of public worship. The courtesans are as much a part of the establishment of the temple, as much the ministers of the gods as the priests. Crimes against life, crimes against property, are not only permitted but enjoined by this odious theology. But for our interference human victims would still be offered to the Ganges, and the widow would still be laid on the pile with the corpse of her husband, and burned alive by her own children. It is by the command and under the special protection of one of the most powerful goddesses that the Thugs join themselves to the unsuspecting travellers, make friends with him, slip the noose round his neck, plunge their knives into his eyes, hide him in the earth, and divide his money and baggage."*

It has thus been shown that Hinduism leads to ill-health, poverty, national ignorance, intellectual weakness, despotism, creates disunion between man and man, degrades women, reduces

* Speech on the Gates of Somnath.

man to the brute, teaches polytheism and pantheism, offers for worship senseless blocks and deities stained with crime, sanctions impurity, robbery, and murder, prescribes worthless means for the removal of sin, does not promote holiness of life, is a religion of fear through life and of despair or false hopes at death, and lastly is rebellion against the rightful Lord of the universe, rendering its adherents liable to the severest punishment.

24. Hinduism incapable of Reform.

All intelligent Hindus admit that great reforms are needed to purify Hinduism. Many think that this is all that is necessary to render it worthy of retention. Some even affirm that it would then occupy one of the highest places among the religions of the world.

Let the changes necessary to reform Hinduism up to the light of the 19th century be considered :

1. Reformed Hinduism should be neither polytheistic nor pantheistic, but monotheistic. All intelligent men now believe in the existence of only one true God. There are no such beings as Vishnu, Siva, Sarasvatí, Durgá, or the 33 crores of the Hindu Pantheon. The Vishnu *bhakti*, the Siva *bhakti*, &c., would all come to an end. No sectarial marks would be worn. The blasphemous assertion *aham Brahmasmi*, I am Brahma, would no longer be made.

2. All idols would be destroyed, and no longer worshipped as giving false and degrading ideas of God. The indecent images on some temples would be broken down. There would no longer be Vaishnava nor Saiva temples.

3. The Vedas, the Code of Manu, the Rámáyana, Mahábhárata, the Puránas, &c., as teaching polytheism, pantheism, containing debasing representations of God, unjust laws, false history, false science, false morals, would no longer be considered sacred books.

4. Hindu worship in temples would cease. Festivals would no longer be celebrated. Pilgrimages to supposed holy places would come to an end. Puja to idols would not be observed in private families.

5. As Hindu temples contain only small shrines for idols, buildings like churches would require to be erected, in which people might assemble for public worship, and receive instruction in the duties of life.

6. Caste would no longer be recognised, and the brotherhood of man would be acknowledged; all caste distinctions would cease.

Every one of the above changes is necessary to meet the views of enlightened men.

Take away sweetness from sugar, and it is no longer sugar;

deprive a man of reason, and he is no longer a human being. Hinduism without its gods, its sacred books, its temples, its worship, its caste, would be no longer Hinduism, but an entirely different religion, like the Sadhárana Brahma Samaj. It would be simply Theistic.

The Rev. Nehemiah Goreh clearly shows in his Lectures that "Brahmoism is a mere reflection of Christianity, a defective incomplete reflection. Before Christianity came here, it was not known to any body, and wherever Christianity is not known, there Brahmoism or Theism is never known." "The light of Christianity has been shining in India through various means for many years, and this light having reached them through various channels has given to educated Indians purer and truer notions of religious truth." The reader is recommended to consider carefully "The Supposed and Real Doctrines of Hindus as held by educated Hindus, with the true source of the former, compiled from the Lectures of the Rev. Nehemiah Goreh."*

PART II.

INDIA CHRISTIAN:

or

What Christianity would do for India.

Introduction.

Before considering this in detail, it may again be observed that it is very necessary to distinguish between what a religion teaches and the conduct of its followers. The former can be held responsible only if its adherents act up to its principles.

Englishmen are supposed to be Christians, and Indians are apt to regard all who come to this country as such; but the Lord Jesus Christ declares that to many who call themselves after His name, He will say at the day of judgment, "I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity."

All men are suffering from the terrible disease of sin. In God's sight they are like lepers, covered from head to foot with putrid sores. The Hindu confession expresses the truth."

Pápo'ham pápakarmáham pápátma pápasambhavah.

"I am sin; I commit sin; my soul is sinful; I am conceived in sin."

Christianity declares its ability to effect a cure; but the time required and its thoroughness depend upon the attention paid to its rules. If a sick man does not take the medicine prescribed or neg-

* Price ½ Anna. Sold by Mr. A. T. Scott, Tract Depôt, Madras.

lects his diet, it is not the fault of the physician that he is long in recovering or never gets well.

Sin is more difficult to cure than leprosy. Even the best Christians are continually breaking the commands of their religion; so that even they are not examples of what the followers of Jesus ought to be. Christianity, therefore, is to be judged by its precepts and their natural results—not by the opposite conduct of many of its nominal adherents.

THE BENEFITS OF CHRISTIANITY.

The people of India would derive the following benefits from the adoption of Christianity:

1. Better Health and Longer Life.

Hinduism teaches men to despise the body, calling it a receptacle of worms. Men are supposed to acquire merit by holding up the arm till it becomes useless or by exposing themselves to blazing fires. Christianity teaches us to take proper care of the body, although we are not to pamper it.

That Christianity tends to secure better health and longer life may first be shown by comparing the mortality in two cities, Birmingham, in England, and Madras, each containing about 450,000 inhabitants. The average deaths a year in Madras is 38·8 per thousand; in Birmingham, 19·8. Every year, on an average, 17,460 persons die in Madras; in Birmingham only 8,910. The average length of life in Madras is 26 years; in Birmingham 50 years. These are extreme cases; but it is certain that the people of England live several years longer than the Hindus. The causes of this will now be stated.

1. *Christianity has no caste restrictions about marriage.*—The evil effects of near relations marrying have been shown. Children are healthier when marriages are contracted from a wider circle. It is also a great advantage in other respects. Hindus have often great difficulties in getting suitable matches within the narrow limits of their caste subdivision.

2. *Early marriage is not required.*—Christianity has not its *garbhadhán*, of which Bengalis made so much during a recent agitation. Dr. Sircar's opinion has been quoted, showing the effects of the Hindu custom. The children of full grown parents will be stronger than those whose constitutions have been weakened by early marriage.

3. *Physicians are honoured, and allowed every opportunity for gaining a thorough knowledge of their profession; midwives are not regarded as low and impure.*—The Hindu account of the origin

of physicians has been mentioned, and the hindrances put in the way of their acquiring skill.

4. *Effective means are employed to check pestilence and disease.* —The superstitious notions of the Hindus are not entertained. Small-pox is prevented by vaccination. In one year 280,000 persons died from the disease in India, while there are very few deaths from it in England. Pure water and cleanliness are the great safeguards against fever and cholera.

5. *Hospitals and Dispensaries are provided.*—When the Lord Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, was on earth, He went about healing the sick as well as teaching the people. His followers regard it as their duty to follow His example by caring for the poor and distressed. When such are ill, they are unable to earn their livelihood, and cannot pay doctors. Hospitals are then of great assistance, and many lives are saved.

By all the above means and others much sickness is prevented, and life is prolonged.

2. Wealth would be increased.

This would be done in the following ways:

1. *Christianity has no restrictions against foreign travel.*— Hindus are forbidden to cross the "black water," or even to dwell for a time among impure Mlechhas. Christianity teaches that the whole world is under the same one true God; that men are brethren, and may freely mix with one another. India produces indigo and tea; these are exported to countries in which they will not grow; while other articles, as kerosene oil, are obtained in exchange. Thus both are benefited. It has been shown how the English and Parsis have been enriched by foreign commerce.

2. *Agriculture is encouraged.*—Manu's Code has been quoted, showing that Brahmans and Kshatriyas should not till the ground. In India agriculture suffers from being left to ignorant ryots. Christianity has no such restrictions, and agriculture is regarded as a noble employment.

3. *Manual Labour is considered honourable.*—It has been shown how the arts are degraded by Hinduism. Christianity teaches the dignity of labour, and condemns only those who are too lazy or too proud to work for their living. In England very clever blacksmiths, weavers, and painters have sometimes been made noblemen. Thus all are encouraged to excel. Ships have been invented that move rapidly against the wind without sails; carriages that fly along without horses; electric wires that convey news in the twinkling of an eye to people a thousand miles off, with many other contrivances. On the other hand, in India things have remained nearly stationary from the time of Manu.

4. *False Charity is discouraged.*—India, called the "Land of Charity," is also the "Land of Beggars." In no other country is begging so respectable. Pandit Sivanath Sastri justly says; "Hindu indiscriminate charity saps the very foundation of national manliness, gives a premium to indolence, and trains up men and women to the meanness of beggary, and not to the dignity of labour." Christianity teaches us to be kind to the sick and the aged; but to the able-bodied it says, if a man able to work refuses to work, neither should he eat.

5. *People are taught to overcome evils, instead of passively submitting to them.*—Hindus believe their unalterable fate to be written on their heads, and think it useless to contend against misfortunes which happen to them. Christianity has no such doctrine, and encourages its followers to take means for the removal of troubles which may be remedied.

6. *Active Benevolence is enjoined.*—According to Hinduism, the attainment of Mukti ought to be the great aim. The best path to it is to refrain from all action, and spend the time in meditation. This must tend to poverty, while human misery is not relieved. Christianity teaches us to labour, and to do all we can to help persons in distress.

7. *Useless Expenditure is Discouraged.*—Most of the people of India are sunk in debt. This often arises from money squandered at marriages and shraddhas. It has been shown that the interest of the money spent on jewels would pay the land tax. Christianity teaches us to regard ourselves as stewards, intrusted with property which should not be wasted. Women, instead of adorning themselves with gold or pearls or costly array, are exhorted to do so with good works, with a meek and quiet spirit.

Agriculture, manufactures, and foreign commerce are the three great sources of national wealth. They are all discouraged by Hinduism, and encouraged by Christianity. The latter also promotes wealth by preventing the useless expenditure so common among Hindus, and so ruinous to their worldly prosperity.

8. *Christianity has no doctrine of* Put, *compelling all to marry.*—The evil effects of the Hindu belief about *Putra* being one who delivers from the hell called *Put*, have been pointed out. Christianity has no such teaching, and encourages prudence with regard to marriage.

If a religion is of no advantage in the affairs of the world which men can see, can it be expected that it should confer eternal heavenly bliss in the world which men have not seen?

3. True Knowledge would be diffused.

1. *The Education of all classes would be encouraged.*—It has been shown that Hinduism limits instruction in the most im-

portant branches of literature to Brahmans. Before Christianity was brought to India, among the great body of the people the only education was that received by a few for the purposes of trade. One of the first things done by Missionaries is to open schools. They are of different grades, from primary vernacular schools up to colleges qualifying for University Examinations. None are denied admittance into them. There are numerous schools for girls: even the castes degraded by Hindus beneath the brutes have been cared for. In several Christian countries there are laws compelling every child to be educated. Education is considered the birth-right of every human being. Christianity says, "That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good."

2. TRUE, *not* FALSE, *Knowledge would be spread.*—Hindus sat at home and framed geography out of their own heads. Christians go in ships to all parts of the world, measure their size, and afterwards describe them. The heavenly bodies are examined by telescopes; every science is carefully studied. History is learned from people who lived about the time the events occurred, and different accounts are compared to see which is the more correct. The more books are read, the more true knowledge is gained, whereas with Hinduism it is the reverse.

There is an irreconcileable enmity between Hinduism and intelligence. It is difficult for persons to acquire sense who worship senseless images, and if they acquire sense anyhow they renounce these gods. As a lamp is the enemy of darkness, so education is the enemy of Hinduism.

4. INTELLECTUAL STRENGTH WOULD BE GAINED.

The mental powers, like the muscles of the body, are strengthened by exercise, and weakened by disuse. The people of India have plenty of natural intelligence, but it is enfeebled and prevented from manifesting itself by their religion. The weakness of the Hindu intellect is shown by its accepting, like young children, the most outrageous statements as true. The people are not taught to reason, but to follow custom, which is superior to Sruti and Smriti. A Hindu family is expected to be guided by its head in all matters, civil and religious.

Christianity says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." People are urged to reflect, to inquire, and to compare, with reference to everything that comes before them. Customs are not to be blindly followed. While everything bad should be given up, all that is good should be retained. Christianity teaches the doctrine of individual responsibility. Alone we entered the world, and alone we depart. "Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God."

5. National Greatness would be promoted.

1. *Christian Nations are not split up into sections having different interests:*—"The Hindu," says Max Müller, "never knew the feeling of nationality." He loved his children; he was zealous for his caste; but he did not think of his country as a whole. Hinduism has so weakened the once conquering Aryans that they have long been an easy prey to every invading race.

2. *The once savage tribes of Europe are now rulers of a great part of the world.*—Two thousand years ago, when the Hindus were comparatively civilised, England was inhabited by a few painted savages, who lived on wild fruits, by hunting and fishing. England is now one of the richest and most powerful countries in the world. The Queen of England rules over nearly one-fourth of the population of the globe. A similar change has taken place in the Western Continent. The United States of America were formerly inhabited only by a few wandering wild tribes. Now the country is famed for its wealth and intelligence.

6. Civil and Religious Freedom would be enjoyed.

1. *Civil liberty would be promoted.*—It has been shown that the Hindus have never known any other form of Government than despotism; that Manu exalted the king to a kind of divinity. Christianity, while it teaches men to honour those in authority, also justifies them in maintaining their rights as subjects.

It is acknowledged that there are remains of heathen despotism in countries like Russia; but wherever Christianity prevails in its purest form, there is most freedom, and a constitutional Government. The Queen of England cannot personally inflict the smallest punishment, or draw the least sum from the public treasury. Every person is entitled to a trial, and the Queen receives only the money voted by Parliament.

2. *Religious Toleration is enjoined.*—As already mentioned, Hinduism is at once most tolerant and fiercely intolerant. A man may believe anything or nothing, he may lead a most immoral life, but let him obey his conscience by declaring himself a Christian by baptism, and he is driven out of his home with the curses of the gods. Christianity teaches perfect toleration. The text already quoted declares that every person has to answer to God for himself individually. This was unknown before the time of Christ. The King of Babylon thought he had a right to throw into a burning furnace any who did not worship the golden idol which he had set up. The Romans were a great and partially civilised nation; but they thought that Christians deserved to be put to death if they did not worship the national gods. As with despot-

ism, so religious toleration has not been conceded in a few countries nominally Christian; but it is found in those like Britain and the United States, where Christianity is best understood.

7. The Brotherhood of Man would be acknowledged.

Hinduism teaches that there are different castes, proceeding from different parts of the Creator. It thus creates an insurmountable barrier between man and man. Christianity breaks down all distinctions which divide and alienate mankind, and establishes a universal brotherhood. It declares that God has made of one blood all nations to dwell on the face of the earth. All men are descended from the same first parents. The differences in colour have been caused by climate and exposure to the weather.

> "Children we are all
> Of one Great Father, in whatever clime
> His providence hath cast the seed of life;
> All tongues, all colours."

We should regard each other as brethren belonging to the same great family, with God as our Father in heaven. Some would not be puffed up with pride, nor others be degraded beneath the brutes.

It is true that the feelings of many nominal Christians are very different from what they ought to be; but this is only because they do not act up to the precepts of the religion they profess.

8. Justice between Man and Man would be promoted.

Quotations have been given from Manu's Code showing the claims of the Brahmans to the possession of the world; the slight punishments to be inflicted on them, while any who showed them disrespect were to be most cruelly treated. These monstrous laws are said to have been given by the "Self-Existent."

Compare with Manu's Code the Penal Code drawn up under Christian influence. No distinction is made with regard to caste, to rich or poor. All are included under the same laws, and meet with the same punishment.

9. Individual Liberty would be enjoyed, and Opposition to Social Reform would be removed.

Caste has been justly called the "most inexorable social tyranny ever inflicted on the human race." A Hindu can never free himself from its restrictions, never escape from its influence. Christianity, on the other hand, gives fully liberty in the following directions:

1. *To travel anywhere.*—There is full permission to cross the "black water" or to reside in any country. No people are to be regarded as Mlechhas. The whole world belongs to God, and He can be worshipped everywhere.

2. *To associate with any people of good conduct, without being considered polluted.*—When Sir Monier Williams, the Oxford Professor of Sanskrit, came to India, pandits bathed to purify themselves after shaking hands with them. Christianity, it is true, forbids keeping company with the wicked: but there is perfect freedom with regard to others.

3. *There are no restrictions about food, provided it is wholesome.*—As has been remarked, the stomach is the seat of Hinduism. Christianity teaches that a man is defiled, not by what he eats, but by evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds. A Christian is not afraid lest people should see him eat, lest his food should be polluted by the shadow of any person; he can take pure water from any hand.

4. *There are no restrictions about marriage except between near relatives.*—It is well known what troubles fall upon the Hindus about marriage in consequence of their absurd caste rules. Christianity is free from all these vexations. Marriage may be contracted between any suitable persons. Early marriage is not required; widow marriage is allowed.

10. Human Misery would be lessened and Happiness increased.

1. *Hinduism is a religion of Selfishness.*—In a hot climate labour is distasteful. Many of the people of India look upon freedom from work as the highest happiness. The most exalted type of Hindu piety is to leave wife, children, and town for a forest, there to lead a solitary life, refraining from all action, good or bad. The poor are not assisted, the ignorant are not instructed; no attempt is made to reform evil customs or wicked men. This is a religion of selfishness; a person cares only for himself.

If the *Karma márga* is followed, charity is bestowed chiefly upon well-to-do Brahmans, instead of the poor and distressed who are supposed to be reaping the fruits of former sins.

2. *Christianity, a religion of Benevolence.*—It describes God in one word, "God is Love." Elsewhere He is addressed, "Thou art good and doest good." Of the Lord Jesus Christ, when on earth, it is said, "He went about doing good." Christianity teaches that the highest form of piety is, not to withdraw from the duties of life, but to discharge them in a truly religious spirit, doing everything as in God's sight, and in obedience to His commands. With regard to our fellow-men, its great commandment is "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Parents should carefully train their children in what is right; all should seek to do good to their neighbours; to

promote the welfare of their nation, and even to do what they can for foreign lands. In Christian countries there are Societies for nearly every benevolent purpose. The poor, orphans, widows, the blind, the homeless, the sick, the aged, are all cared for. The oppressed everywhere are sought to be relieved, and slavery to be abolished. The Peace Society seeks to put an end to war. Education Societies provide schools for the poor. Missionary Societies seek to diffuse a knowledge of true religion throughout the world. By all these means human misery is lessened and happiness increased.

11. Women would be raised to their Right Position.

Manu asserts that the evil qualities of women were ordained by the Creator; that woman is "falsehood itself"; that she must always be under subjection; that a wife may be flogged like a child or slave; that she has no religious duties; widows are forbidden to marry, and encouraged to commit *sati*.

Christianity makes no such declarations, has no such rules. Women are not considered morally worse than men; rather the reverse is the case. The husband, it is true, is considered the head of the family, and when husband and wife disagree on questions not involving right and wrong, the former is considered the superior. But the wife is to be regarded with the tenderest love.

Christianity raises the position of women in the following ways:

1. *By Education.*—In Christian countries girls attend school as well as boys, and receive an education suited to their future life. They are thus made more intelligent, are fitter companions to their husbands, able to advise them, and to bring up their children properly.

2. *By allowing women to mix in Society.*—Christianity has no purdah restrictions. Ráma says of Sítá, "Neither houses nor vestments, nor enclosing walls are the screen of a woman. Her own virtue alone protects her." Women who are properly educated and who have a pure religion, may safely be allowed to mix with well behaved men. This benefits the women themselves. By intercourse with educated men, their own intelligence is promoted. They gain self-respect, feeling that they are not distrusted by their husbands. In Christian countries young unmarried women can be allowed to go out alone. In this country, however, at present sudden changes in this respect are not desirable, but women should not be shut up in Zenanas.

3. *By forbidding polygamy and concubinage.*—It is true that Hindus, as a rule, have only one wife; but this generally arises from poverty and from a knowledge of the quarrels caused by rival wives. Concubinage is common among the wealthy. Hindu rajas had an unlimited number both of wives and concubines. The

example of the gods may be claimed in justification. Krishna, supposed to represent Vishnu, is said to have had 16,000 wives and 180,000 sons. Christianity forbids the marriage of more than one wife, and condemns concubinage. Household quarrels are thus prevented, and the position of women is raised.

4. *By forbidding divorce except for adultery.*—Hindus, in this respect, it is allowed, are much better than Muhammadans who can send away their wives at any moment, simply by saying, "Thou art divorced." Still, divorce is allowed for several reasons besides adultery.

5. *By not requiring early marriage, and allowing women to have a voice in the choice of their husbands.*—The evils resulting from early marriage have been shown. Sometimes they lead to the horrible cruelty, now known as Harimaitism. As children are not married, women, after consulting their parents, can marry those for whom they have an affection.

6. *By allowing widows to marry and forbidding Sati.*—Hinduism dooms widows to a life of misery. It is alleged that their husbands have been taken away by death on account of their sins. Much immorality and child murder are thus occasioned. Christianity rather encourages young widows to marry; elderly widows are recommended to engage in acts of charity, as assisting the poor, nursing the sick, &c. The barbarous custom of *sati* is unknown in Christian countries. So far from being considered an act of merit, it is regarded as a great crime.

7. *By freely allowing them to receive religious instruction.*—It has been shown that this is forbidden by Manu. Christianity rightly places them on the same footing as men in this respect. Women have to teach their children their duty to God; they should also endeavour to infuse a religious spirit into their husbands who are apt to be absorbed by worldly cares. There are numbers of Christian women who go about instructing the ignorant, and preparing the dying for the great change that awaits them.

In the above ways the position of women would be improved.

12. Man would not be degraded to the Brutes.

It has been mentioned that, according to Hinduism, all life is the same. A man may transmigrate into a dog, a fish, an insect, even into a plant. Manu prescribes the same atonement for killing a Sudra as for killing a cat, a dog, a frog, or a crow. Christianity teaches that there is an impassable barrier between man and the lower animals. Man has a soul that will live for ever; the lower animals have only life which perishes with the body. Man can know and worship his Creator; the lower animals cannot be taught about God.

Christianity also teaches that we did not exist before our pres-

ent life, and that there is no transmigration. In another world people will be rewarded or punished according to their life in the present world.

13. Animal Worship and Idolatry would come to an end.

It has been shown that Hinduism regards the very excrements of the cow as sacred; her urine is the best of holy waters, the ashes of cowdung sprinkled over a sinner converts him into a saint. Pills composed of the five products of the cow cleanse from pollution of every kind. All this is abhorrent to Christianity.

It was said of a city of Europe in ancient times that idols were so numerous that it was easier to find a god than to find a man. Somewhat the same may be said of India. The land is full of idols. In fact there is no object in heaven above or in the earth beneath which a Hindu is not ready to worship.

Folly of Idolatry.—Idolatry has been well compared to child's play. Little children talk to their dolls as if they had life. They dress them, pretend to give them food, put them to sleep, and so forth. Grown up people do just the same. They treat their idols as living beings. They offer them food, though they cannot eat; they have different kinds of music before images that cannot hear; they have lights before what cannot see. In the cold season they furnish them with warm clothes; in the hot season they fan them; and lest mosquitoes should bite them, they place them within curtains at night.

Instead of the idols taking care of their worshippers, it is the latter who have to protect the former. They are constantly afraid lest the hands and feet of their gods should be broken. Robbers sometimes break into temples, and carry off the jewels. The gods cannot give even one good screech for help. Cockroaches sometimes destroy the colour of images; rats make holes in them; bats defile them; flies, after sitting upon various unclean things, alight on them. Where is their divinity, seeing they suffer themselves to be thus insulted?

Idolatry is strongly condemned by Christianity. The second of its Ten Commandments forbids the worship of images.

Hindus admit that Brahma is *nírákár*, without form. Christians say that God is a Spirit. A sculptor may make an image of a man's body; but can he make a representation of his soul? It is equally impossible to make an idol like God. "To whom will ye liken me or shall I be equal?" saith the Holy One.

It is foretold that the time will come when the nations of the earth will cast their idols to the bats, and their worship will be utterly abolished.

14. The one true God alone would be worshipped.

In the Rig-Veda the gods are generally said to be thrice eleven, with their wives. The number was gradually increased, till they are now said to amount to 33 crores.

The Christian idea is spreading that there is only one God. Hence educated Hindus try to excuse polytheism by saying that all the gods are one under different names. The fallacy of this has been shown.

A Hindu must feel doubtful to which of the gods of unequal power and jealous of each other, he should address his prayers. Is he certain to be protected by the one he invokes? Should he pray to one alone or to them all at once?

There is, however, another question. Do these gods actually exist? Are there any such beings? Swarga, the heaven of Indra, is said to be on the top of Mount Meru. Vaikuntha, the heaven of Vishnu, is often said to be there also. It has been shown that there is no such mountain. Kailása, the heaven of Siva, is said to be in the Himálayas, north of the Mánasa lake. The Himálayas have been explored, and no such heaven has been found. The gods of the Hindus are like the thousands of gods in other countries of the world, the mere inventions of men. Prayers addressed to them are utterly useless. Not only so; their worshippers are guilty of rebellion against the rightful Lord of the Universe.

Polytheism will be swept away. "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens."

Besides polytheism, Hinduism teaches pantheism in the formula, "One only without a second." Brahma is said to be the only true existing being; everything besides is an unreality. This Brahma is void of qualities and does nothing. The whole world is supposed to be evolved out of Maya, or illusion. The absurd and impious expression, "I am Brahma" is claimed to be used. The personality of God and man are thus lost. Such a system is condemned by Christianity equally with polytheism. Both are higher and lower forms of the same view of the world.

If India were Christian, the worship of Vishnu, Siva, Ráma, Kálí, Sarasvatí, and others would cease. All would kneel, adoring their great Father in heaven, the one true God, who alone exists, and is able to hear the cry and answer the prayers of His worshippers.

15. A Deity worthy of Adoration would be presented.

The idea conceived of God by a person has a most important influence both on his religious beliefs and his conduct in life. This is acknowledged in the Indian proverb, *Yathah deva, tatha bhaktah,*

"As is the God, so is the worshipper." We become like in character the God we worship. If he is revengeful and impure, our evil passions will be strengthened; if He is holy and loving, we shall put on more and more of His image.

It has been acknowledged that the Sastras give very conflicting ideas of God. He is supposed to be a compound of truth, passion, and darkness. Take, however, the deities who have the greatest number of worshippers, Vishnu, Siva, and Kálí. They are represented as fighting with each other like men, returning evil for evil, as the slaves of vile passions. Kálí is blood-thirsty. It is true, that, like powerful human despots, they are to be feared and honoured; but by contemplating them and their actions, the worshippers are made worse instead of better.

Christianity, on the other hand, gives the most exalted ideas of God, and His worship is fitted to have a most beneficial influence.

He is the "I AM," the self-existent, "without beginning of days or end of years." "From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." He is unchanging, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." He is the Almighty God. He called the universe into existence, and His government extends over all. He is never unconscious. He never slumbers nor sleeps. "The Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary." He knows everything that takes place throughout His vast dominions. Not a hair of our head can fall to the ground without His knowledge; every thought of our heart is known to Him. His ear is ever open to the cry of His children.

The one true God is most unlike the *saguna* Brahmá. He is a God of truth; He is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. His most glorious attribute is His spotless holiness. Sin is that abominable thing which He hates. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts." Instead of exhibiting, like Brahma, an example of selfishness, He is continually doing good to His creatures. His character is expressed in one word—God is LOVE. Still, it is not the feeling which looks upon good and evil with equal eye. If a king allowed crime to be unpunished, his kingdom would become like a hell. But God's own declaration is, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his evil way and live."

A worshipper becomes like his God in character. It has been shown that the more a man resembles Brahma the more selfish and useless does he become. Would it be right for a man to copy some of the acts of Brahmá, Vishnu, Siva, and Krishna? On the other hand, the highest attainment of a Christian is to be pure, loving and holy like God.

Which of the above views is the more reasonable? which gives the more exalted idea of God?

Milton thus describes the feelings which ought to arise in the mind from the contemplation of the earth and heavens:

"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sitt'st above these heavens,
To us invisible or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power Divine.

This great Being deserves our worship. He first called us into existence; we have been dependent upon Him for every breath that we draw; we live upon His earth; everything we possess is His gift. He is both our Father in heaven and our King, deserving our warmest love and utmost respect. To worship Him is both our duty, and would have an excellent influence upon our character.

16. The Eternal Distinction between Right and Wrong would be recognised.

It has been shown that, according to Hinduism, the gods can do what they please. The *Jivanmukta* is to look with equal eye upon virtue and vice.

Christianity teaches that holiness and sin are as opposed as light and darkness; that what would be sinful in a human being would be much worse in God. The Deity of Christianity is spotlessly holy.

Christianity teaches that men have free will; they are not obliged to commit evil actions on account of *karma* or because they were written on their heads. When they sin, the fault is their own.

17. The True Pardon of Sin would be obtained.

Man's Sinfulness.—The feeling is universal that man is a sinner and deserves punishment. The most important question that can be asked is, "What must I do to be saved?"

It has been shown that Hinduism gives contradictory answers whether sin can be forgiven or not. One doctrine is that the fruit of every action, good or bad, must be reaped. The other is that the most worthless means suffice for the removal of sin. Almsgiving, pilgrimages, bathing in supposed sacred waters are some of the ways prescribed. Drinking water in which a Brahman has dipt his toe, or repeating the name of Hari, is supposed to absolve from the greatest crimes.

The Hindu confession, "I am sin, I commit sin"; has been quoted. There are statements very similar in the Bible. David says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother

conceive me." It is also written: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it." It has been compared to the nim tree, always producing bitter leaves and fruit, until its nature has been changed.

The holiest men are the first to admit their own sinfulness. Most people compare themselves with their neighbours, and are satisfied if they come up to their standard. Sometimes they contrast themselves with persons notoriously wicked, and are proud because they think themselves better. Truly good men compare themselves with what God's law requires, and their confession is, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."

The two great sins chargeable against every human being are *ungodliness* and *selfishness*.

The verdict pronounced upon Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." The prophet Daniel explained the grounds of this judgment when he said, "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." When conscience awakes, we see nothing in the past but a career of guilt—the grand purpose of our lives neglected, the great God treated with indifference, His holy law trampled under foot. God contrasts the gratitude of the very beasts with the regardlessness of man. "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

Need of an Incarnation.—In all ages the hope has been more or less entertained that God would become incarnate to deliver man from the burden of sin and misery under which the world is groaning. Hinduism has its incarnations. The Kalki Avatár is yet to come, when Vishnu, at the end of the Kali Yug, is to appear seated on a white horse, with drawn sword in his hand blazing like a comet, for the destruction of the wicked, and the restoration of purity.

Christianity also teaches that man is so deeply plunged in sin and his guilt is so great, that a Divine incarnation was necessary for his deliverance. The first promise of this was given by God Himself thousands of years ago. The Son of God, pitying the human race, came down from heaven for our salvation. By His death on the cross He bore the punishment due to our sins; by his obedience to the law of God He wrought out a perfect righteousness, which, like a spotless robe, is given to His followers.

A very erroneous impression prevails among some Hindus. They think that Christianity represents God as angry till propitiated by the Son. On the contrary, the atonement originated in the love of the Father. "God so loved the world that He gave

His only begotten Son" to be our Saviour. But the Son was equally willing. His response was, "Lo! I come; I delight to do Thy will."

Some think that God may freely pardon sin without an atonement. But God is our King as well as our Father, and to forgive sin without satisfaction to justice, would tend to spread rebellion throughout the universe.

The following illustration has been used: A part of the army of one of the wisest and best of kings conspired against him. They were seized, disarmed, and condemned to die. The king wished to save their lives, but a free pardon would have tempted others to rebel. The king's only son, who was commander-in-chief of the army, also wished to deliver the condemned men. It was agreed that the prince should suffer punishment in their stead, and when this was done, those who asked pardon in his name would be forgiven.

As the king's son in the parable offered to suffer that the rebel soldiers might be spared, so the eternal Son of God agreed to become man as the Lord Jesus Christ, to suffer and die in our stead. For 33 years He lived on earth, perfectly obeying all God's laws, and at last died on the cross. On the third day He rose from the dead, and afterwards ascended to heaven, where He occupies the highest place of honor. Pardon is now freely offered to all who seek it in His name, accepting Him as their Saviour.

No illustration that can be given fully meets the case; but the foregoing may give some idea of the way in which God's justice and mercy are reconciled through Christianity.

18. Holiness of Life would be promoted.

It has been shown that in Hindu temples no instruction is given in the duties of life. The mantras repeated are unintelligible to the worshippers. The sculptures and dancing girls in some temples can only have a demoralizing influence.

In Christian churches the one true God is worshipped in a solemn befitting manner, and the people are exhorted to live virtuously. They are urged not to tell lies, not to steal, not to do injustice to any one; to be patient, to be at peace with one another and with all men; to show their faith and piety by their good conduct. Those who are in sorrow are comforted; the weak are strengthened, those who have gone astray into evil courses are warned; the ignorant are instructed. Christian ministers are not mutterers of incantations or performers of empty ceremonies. Their office is to teach the people to lead holy lives.

In Christian churches there is nothing to be seen to excite impure thoughts. Every thing has a contrary effect.

The Hindu Puránas contain no instruction that is conducive to good morals. They teach that the crimes committed by the gods are not crimes at all, and also that the crimes of those persons who regard the gods with *bhakti* are not regarded by those gods as crimes. Instead of becoming virtuous, the more such books are read, the more will people become licentious and deceitful.

The Bible teaches most distinctly that the *bhakti* of persons who are immoral is not regarded by God as piety at all; that without holiness of heart no one shall see God; that the happiness of heaven will be bestowed upon the virtuous alone, and that the wicked, to whatever religion they belong, shall be cast into hell.

The proverb has been quoted, "As is the god, so is the worshipper." The contemplation of Krishna sporting with the gopis, or of Siva smoking bhang and seducing the wives of the Rishis, can only have an injurious influence. On the other hand, the worship of a God, "glorious in holiness," should have a beneficial effect. Every Divine excellence shone forth in the Lord Jesus Christ, the true *avatára.* He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He went about doing good. It is true that many Christians do not imitate the example of Christ; but such are not worthy of the Christian name. Those only are true Christians who desire and endeavour to be like Christ.

Hindus cannot pray to gods who are themselves stained with sin to make them pure. Christians are taught to ask God's Holy Spirit to raise them when they fall, to strengthen them when they are tempted to sin, to free them from every vice, and to make them like their Father in heaven.

In all these ways, holiness is promoted by Christianity.

19. Freedom from false Fears through Life.

Hindus are in constant dread lest they should suffer from the evil influence of planets; they are always liable to meet with what are regarded as bad omens; they are afraid of the evil eye; countless evil spirits are supposed to be watching to bring upon them sickness and other misfortunes. Astrologers have to be consulted, charms worn, mantras repeated, and offerings made to guard against these evils.

Christianity delivers men from all such imaginary dangers. Astrology is a sin against God. It is placing lifeless planets in the room of their Creator. The one true God is Lord of heaven above and of the earth beneath. Everything is under His control. The planets are merely His servants. They have no influence on human affairs. God never changes, never ceases to reign. No time is more lucky or unlucky than another. Any time is proper for what ought to be done; but anything wrong is equally forbid-

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den at all times. The Christian does not require to consult astrologers.

Omens are childish superstitions. There is not the slightest connexion between meeting a horse or a Brahman and the good success or bad success of any business. A lizard is not a prophet to foretell future events. A South Indian proverb says, "The lizard that was the oracle of the whole village has fallen into the broth pot." If the plaintiff and defendant in a suit went to court together, they would meet the same omens, yet one would lose and the other gain the case. The Christian, instead of being guided by the planets or omens, uses the reason which God has given him to judge about his undertakings, with prayer for guidance.

The Christian is not afraid of the evil eye. He knows that it has no power and cannot harm him.

The Christian does not fear the demons of which the Hindus stand in such constant dread. He knows that there are no such beings as Deví, Mári-amman, and Ola Bibi. They are like the imaginary goblins by which some ignorant parents try to frighten their children. Small-pox is guarded against by vaccination; pure water, wholesome food, and cleanliness help greatly to protect from sickness.

The true Christian looks up to God as his loving Father in heaven. He has a father's *eye* to watch over him. Wherever he is, by day or by night, he is never out of His sight. He has a father's *ear* to listen to his requests. An earthly parent cannot always give his child what he needs; but God has all power. He has a father's *hand* to guide and protect him. Earthly parents may err; they may be too weak to deliver from danger. Not so with God. The Christian has a father's *home* to receive him at last.

The Christian ties no charms. His charm is *prayer*. Nothing happens to him except by the will of God. He knows that everything is intended for his good in the end. God may send affliction to purify him, as gold is tried in the fire; but it will soon be over, and he looks forward to an eternity of joy.

Oh the happiness of having God for a Father! The greatest king cannot do for us what God can; His wealth can never fail; His power can never become weak; His love knows no decay.

20. CHRISTIANITY A RELIGION OF HOPE.

Hope in Life.—It has been shown that Hinduism is a religion of despair. The present age is supposed to be the Kali Yug, during which things will get worse and worse. Christianity denies this. Things will get better instead of worse. What improvements have been made even during the life-time of persons now living! Supplies of good water have been obtained for some towns;

hospitals and dispensaries have been opened; quinine, the best medicine for fever, has been introduced; roads and railways have been constructed; schools have been commenced. A reign of peace and righteousness is foretold.

Hope in Death.—As already mentioned, death is the inevitable event which no one can escape. The richest monarch in the world cannot purchase exemption; the loftiest walls and strongest guards cannot hinder its entrance.

Many Hindus die, like animals, unconcerned. Others are deluded by false hopes. They suppose that they have washed away their sins by bathing in some river or tank, and have accumulated merit by their gifts to Brahmans. The falsity of this has been shown. The thoughtful Hindu must say, "In great alarm I depart." Although his present life may have been free from vice, during his countless former births there may be sins still requiring expiation in some terrible hell.

Christianity denies the doctrine of transmigration. We had no former births, and therefore no sins, arising from them, for which we must suffer. The Christian has no fears on such a ground.

The Christian, it is true, has committed many sins in this life. Their great number and enormity are fully acknowledged. But he has accepted God's offered pardon through Jesus Christ. His sins, though like mountains, have been buried in the ocean of divine mercy. His best actions, he feels, are stained with sin; but he enters heaven clothed with the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness. Death is the messenger of his heavenly Father, calling him to His palace, there to dwell for ever in unspeakable joy.

The happiness of heaven can be described only in the language of earth. It is said of the righteous: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, and God shall wipe away all tears from their tears." Heaven is compared to a city whose streets are of pure gold, as it were transparent glass. Those who enter it are presented as having crowns on their head, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing the praises of Him who redeemed them. The great happiness of heaven is that it is *eternal*. There is no passing from heaven to hell as according to Hinduism. Those who enter there shall be "for ever with the Lord." The Christian does not get to heaven by his own merit, but as a gift of God, and hence he has no fear of his merit being exhausted, and that he will have to fall down again to this world of sin and sorrow.

It has been mentioned that a Hindu can never expect to meet those whom he loved here in another world. A mother will never again see her child; a child his mother. On the other hand, Christians do not thus mourn for the departed. They have the sure hope of spending an eternity of bliss with those who truly accepted the Saviour.

21. True Christians are the adopted Children of the Lord of the Universe.

It has been shown that the one true God is the rightful Lord of the worlds which He created, and which are sustained by His power. It is our duty to worship Him alone. To bow down to any other is rebellion against His authority.

Instead of our rightful Lord, Hinduism sets up for worship gods stained with crimes, brute beasts, and senseless blocks. Those who do so are guilty of high treason against God. Time is given to them to repent of their sin; but they are rebels undeserving of any blessings in this life, and liable to eternal misery in the next.

All human beings are, in one sense, children of God. He is their Father by creation. Men, however, are like children who leave the house of a wise, good, and loving father to associate with wicked people. They do not love God as a Father, they disobey His commands; they can no longer be regarded as His children.

But God is merciful, and wishes to receive back into His family all who repent of their sins and seek forgiveness. In His great love He sent the Lord Jesus Christ into the world to show us the way to God and to be our Saviour. He taught us to repent, and then assured us of forgiveness and acceptance with God, not as servants who are pardoned, but as children who are restored to a place in their father's house, which they have lost by sin and rebellion; we thus become heirs to the riches and glories of heaven.

Christians are taught to address God as their "Father in heaven," their kind and loving Father, acquainted with all their wants, and willing to give them whatever is for their good. Here, it is true, they are like children at school, who have lessons to learn which they may not like. God may try them by afflictions, but they know that they are intended to do them good at last. They are to purify them from sin, to make them more and more like their heavenly Father, fitter to dwell with Him for ever.

A good man when dying was heard to say:

"I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a redeemed sinner, a pardoned rebel, all through grace, and by the most wonderful means which infinite wisdom could devise. I am a Christian—what then? Why I am a temple of God, and surely I ought to be pure and holy. I am a Christian—what then? I am a child of God, and ought to be filled with filial love, reverence, joy, and gratitude. I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a disciple of Christ, and must imitate Him who was meek and lowly in heart, and pleased not Himself. I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am an heir of heaven, and hastening on to the abodes of the blessed, to join the full

choir of the glorified ones in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb."

The invitation of Christians to Hindus is, "Come with us, and we will do thee good." "Wilt thou not from this time cry, My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth?"

22. Christianity will yet spread over the whole Earth.

If a religion be true and from God, it will be fitted to become the universal religion. God is one, and His will is one. All men have the same nature. All are sinful, needing forgiveness; all need divine help to enable them to act virtuously. All require wisdom in this world, and heavenly happiness in the next. Seeing then that these blessings are absolutely necessary to all men, the religion which confers them must be fitted to become universal.

Each of the religions of men has been adapted to the ideas of one people alone, and instead of being common to all, each of them exalts some one nation only, and despises all the rest of the world.

Hinduism is a religion only for Hindus. People must by birth belong to the four castes. It makes no attempt to spread itself. Foreign nations are impure Mlechhas.

On the contrary, Christianity is intended for all men alike. Its usages are fitted for the observance of all men throughout the world; it makes no distinctions between nations.

When the Lord Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, was about to leave the world and return to heaven, He said to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, and lo, I am with you always." In obedience to this command, Christian Missionaries go everywhere, making disciples of all nations. To enable this to be done, large sums are raised every year in Europe and America.

The prophecies in the Bible about the passing away of idolatry have been mentioned. On the other hand, it states that Christianity will spread everywhere, and never come to an end. "All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name." "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised." "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

Christianity is now seeking to become the religion of India as it sought, 18 centuries ago, to become the religion of Europe. The circumstances are very much alike, and so will be the final result.

Hindus and Europeans, the Eastern and Western Aryans, once lived together speaking the same language, and worshipping

the same gods. After the latter went to Europe, they agreed in many things. They had their schools of philosophy like the Hindus; their gods were said to have behaved much in the same way as those of India, and were worshipped with similar rites.

Christian Missionaries, Asiatics, came to Europe, and preached to its idolaters, as European Missionaries now do in India. For two or three centuries, Christians were, at times, cruelly persecuted by the Roman emperors, and great numbers were put to death. At last the emperor Constantine himself became a Christian, and persecutions ceased. In Europe, the idols have been utterly abolished. There is not now a single worshipper of the gods of ancient times: only the ruins of a few temples still exist.

Christianity is the religion of the richest, the most civilised, the best educated, and most progressive nations of the earth. As Gladstone says, "Christianity rules the world." The great inventions which have done so much to promote human well-being, as the steam-engine, railways, the electric telegraph, originated among Christian nations. Hindu, Buddhist, and Muhammadan Governments are despotic; their rulers stand above law; their kingdoms are regarded as their private property; without trial they can take away the lives of their subjects. Christian nations, as a rule, have representative Governments, and law stands above kings and rulers.

Does not all this declare that the highest civilization emanates from Christianity? In Christianity there is a power which raises human nature to a height that it has never attained without it.

The idea of *progress* is derived from Christianity. Among Hindus, the rule is to *follow the ancients*. Instead of things becoming better, this is regarded as the Kali Yug, when they are to grow worse and worse. China has had a stationary semi-civilization for 2,000 years. Muhammadans are governed by the Koran, any deviation from which is regarded as impiety. The English, before they embraced Christianity, were little better than savages, without a written language. What a difference now!

Christian nations are the only ones which are making persistent and systematic efforts to relieve the human race from the evils under which it has groaned for thousands of years,—from war, slavery, crime, disease, and ignorance. War has not ceased among them, but its ferocity has been softened, and a desire for peace is spreading. Arbitration is now resorted to in many cases. Efforts will be continued

> "Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furl'd
> In the Parliament of men, the Federation of the world."

Slavery is sought to be abolished everywhere. Reformatory schools have been established for young criminals; trades are taught in jails to enable prisoners to earn an honest livelihood. Dispensaries and hospitals have been opened; societies, like Lady

Dufferin's, have been formed to afford medical relief to women. Education is considered the birthright of every human being; all the states which profess Christianity are seeking, more or less, to humanise, reform, and elevate mankind.

Christianity is the only religion which is making vigorous efforts to promote its spread over the whole world. The last charge of its Founder, though zealously carried out for a time, was afterwards neglected, and it is only in recent times that it has been obeyed, and hitherto very imperfectly. Still, there are thousands of Christian Missionaries scattered over the world. There is scarcely a town in India which does not contain at least a Mission school.

Christianity has already exerted a powerful influence upon educated Indian thought. Several important Christian doctrines have been accepted as true. Educated Hindus are now *monotheists*. This has been derived from Christianity. Hinduism is both polytheistic and pantheistic. It teaches that souls are uncreated, self-existent and eternal. Educated Hindus acknowledge the Fatherhood of God, that we owe our being to Him. Hinduism teaches that caste is of Divine origin—that men are unequal by the decree of God. Educated Hindus now generally acknowledge the Brotherhood of man, another great doctrine of Christianity. There is now a greater desire than before to seek the common good, instead of selfishly consulting one's own ease and interests.

Higher ideas of morality are being diffused. Hindus excused the crimes of their gods on the maxim, "To the mighty is no sin." Educated Hindus admit the fallacy of this reasoning. For many centuries some Hindu temples had the most indecent sculptures, prostitutes took a prominent part in their religious services, without a voice being raised against them. The Penal Code punishes people who sell or expose obscene books, pictures, or statues; but permits such things in the name of religion. Some educated Hindus, through the spread of Christian light, are beginning to protest against such abominations. A woman, according to Hinduism, is denied religious instruction, and taught that she has simply to consider her husband as her god. Under Christian influence, female education is spreading, and the just rights of women, long denied, are beginning to be acknowledged, though not yet conceded.

The change of religion which took place in Europe, in spite of the strongest opposition of the Roman Government, will also happen in India. The temples of Vishnu and Siva will yet be as deserted as those of Jupiter and Minerva in Europe. The Eastern and Western Aryans will kneel at the same footstool, and offer the same grand old prayer, beginning, "Our Father which art in heaven."

When this change will take place, we do not know. It took

three centuries to overthrow heathenism in ancient Europe, and it may take as long in modern India. Light, however, is gradually spreading, and there may be a rapid reformation.

23. Testimonies to Christianity.

A large number of these from some of the greatest men that have ever lived, will be found in *Testimonies of Great Men to the Bible and Christianity.** Only a very few can be quoted.

Gladstone, the most distinguished English statesman of recent times, says :

"I see that for the last fifteen hundred years Christianity has always marched in the van of all human improvement and civilization, and it has harnessed to its car all that is great and glorious in the human race."

"Christianity continues to be that which it has been heretofore, the great medicine for the diseases of human nature, the great consolation for its sorrows; the great stay to its weakness, the main and only sufficient guide in the wilderness of the world."

Referring to his own personal belief he says :

"All I write, and all I think, and all I hope is based upon the divinity of our Lord, the one central hope of our poor wayward race."

Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, bears the following testimony to the Effects of Christianity :—

"It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world a character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love: has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, temperaments, and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice; and has exercised so deep an influence, that the simple record of three years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the discussions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."

Macaulay, in a speech in parliament, describes Christianity as "that religion which has done so much to promote justice and mercy, and freedom, and arts, and sciences, and good government, and domestic happiness, which has struck off the chains of the slave, which has mitigated the horrors of war, which has raised women from servants and playthings into companions and friends." To discountenance it, he says, "is to commit high treason against humanity and civilisation."

He characterises Christianity as :

"Strong in her sublime philosophy, strong in her spotless morality, strong in those internal and external evidences to which

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the most powerful and comprehensive of human intellects have yielded assent."

English and American atheists seek to give educated Hindus the impression that Christianity is decaying in the West. It has never been more vigorous. Indians have proof of this before their eyes. Every aged Hindu knows that missionaries are now far more numerous than they were when he was young. In the United States 17 new churches, on an average, are built every day. Missionaries are not sent to India alone, but to every accessible part of the earth.

24. Summary.

It has been briefly shown what blessings Christianity, if truly accepted, would confer upon the people of India. Health and long life would be promoted; true knowledge would be diffused; India would be raised among the nations of the earth; civil and religious freedom would be enjoyed; the brotherhood of man would be acknowledged; justice between man and man would be promoted; opposition to social reform would cease; human misery would be lessened and happiness increased; women would be raised to their proper position; idolatry and other degrading forms of worship would come to an end; the one true God, worthy of the utmost reverence, would alone be worshipped; true pardon of sin would be obtained; holiness of life would be promoted; deliverance from false fears would be obtained through life, with a glorious hope in death; true Christians would become the adopted sons of the Lord of the Universe, gradually growing more and more like Him, and sharing in His eternal happiness.

The Bible truly says: "*Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" Christianity would greatly benefit the Hindus in this life as well as in the next, while their own religion has just the opposite effect.

A National Religion.

A cry is raised by some educated Hindus for a *National* religion. It is thought degrading to India to have any other religion than her own.

It has been shown that there is no national geography, astronomy, chemistry, geometry, &c. Science is one all the world over. It is the same with religion. If each country had its own God, there might be different religions; but all enlightened men are now agreed that there is only one God, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the Universe. The Brotherhood of Man is similarly acknowledged.

Since God is one and all men are alike His children, it is rea-

sonable to suppose that He has given only one religion. A *national* religion shows that it is not the *true* religion.

The most enlightened countries in Europe and America accepted a religion first made known to them by Asiatics, and did not reject it from false patriotism, saying "We must have national religions."

An Indian poet says: "The disease born with you will destroy you: the medicine from a far-off mountain not born with you, will cure that disease."

Of all false patriotisms that is the worst which seeks by sophistry to defend erroneous beliefs because they are national. It promotes hypocrisy and disregard of truth among its advocates, while it is a grievous wrong to their ignorant countrymen, tending to perpetuate the reign of superstition.

THE FUTURE RELIGION OF INDIA.

Hinduism, it must be confessed, has a very strong hold upon the people of India. The great majority have been reduced to such a state of mental weakness that the most contradictory statements, the most astounding miracles, are accepted with unhesitating faith. Indeed, Sir Monier Williams remarks that "the more evidently physical and metaphysical speculations are opposed to common sense, the more favour do they find with some Hindu thinkers." The people, as a rule, hug the fetters of caste; their gods are beings after their own heart.

Hinduism, like every religion except Christianity, appeals to the pride so dear to the human heart. Man wishes to be his own saviour. The Hindu rejects the idea of trusting to anything for salvation but his own self-righteousness,—the merit he has been able to accumulate. It is true that he acknowledges some misdeeds, but they are counterbalanced by acts of charity. A Hindi verse says, A man steals an anvil and gives away a needle. He then stands waiting for the celestial chariot which he thinks must take him to heaven.

The foregoing remarks refer to the people generally. Among educated Hindus, with some noble exceptions, prospects are not much brighter. The following description, written half a century ago, still applies to not a few:—

"They show no hatred of idolatry, no anxiety to rescue their fellow-countrymen from its yoke, no lofty moral bearing, no great aims or aspirations, no seriousness of spirit, or thoughtful earnest inquiry after religious truth. In the flush and ardour of youth, the great majority kill the conscience by outward compliance with the idolatry which they despise, or by making themselves over deliberately to worldliness. There is nothing of healthy life connected with their intellectual activity. The mongrel class, of which we now write, too timid to break off from what they despise and disbelieve, will live the subtle faithless life of the Greek

of the Lower Empire, without courage or conscience, and hide but too often the heart of the atheist under the robe of the idolater."

On the other hand there are encouragements.

The Indian proverb has been quoted, "Truth conquers." The light of true knowledge will gradually disperse the spiritual darkness which now broods over India. As has been shown, already very important religious truths have been adopted from Christianity by educated Hindus.

Already Christianity numbers upwards of two millions of professed followers. Among them there are some who take a high position for ability. One of the most eloquent members of the National Congress is a Christian. In course of time Indian Luthers will arise, and there will be a general movement in favour of Christianity. The prophecy, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" indicates that it will be embraced by large numbers simultaneously.

It has already been stated that national character has a considerable influence. It must be admitted that while Englishmen are noted for their enterprise, perseverance, and, on the whole, for truthfulness and justice, they are often wanting in the meekness and love which distinguished the Founder of their religion. Indians, when they embrace the Gospel, will, in course of time, develop a more lovable type of Christianity.

Although the precise period cannot be mentioned, the time will assuredly come when India, like England, will give up its polytheism, idolatry, and pantheism. India will then, as now, be filled with temples; but they will be temples dedicated to the one true God. It will be thickly populated with worshippers, but they will worship God in spirit and in truth. It will have its highways thronged with pilgrims; but they will be travellers on the way to heaven. Instead of the shouts of multitudes mad upon their idols, there will be sweet songs of praise to God and the Redeemer.

Blessed are they who hasten on this glorious time; sad is the lot of those who seek to perpetuate the present reign of superstition.

The writer concludes with a petition in which he wishes the reader could heartily join :—

O God, who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and didst send Thy blessed Son to preach peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are nigh : Grant that all the people of this land may feel after Thee and find Thee, and hasten, O heavenly Father, the fulfilment of Thy promise, to pour out Thy Spirit upon all flesh, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

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